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HISTORY

H. H. LAMB
Climate History and the Modern World
307pp. Methuen. £8.95.
04163330X

As a historian of climate - though he is by training and profession a meteorologist - H. H. Lamb starts by asserting something which was long denied: the Unesco General History, published twenty years ago, proclaimed that the "climate" had, in the main, been stable, or become so, since the sixth millennium BC. Lamb revises this notion of "fixity" just as he challenges that of a "normal period" which is supposedly representative of the average meteorology of a given region: for a long time, specialists considered as "normal" the twenty-year periods from 1901 to 1930 and 1930 to 1960. In fact, these groups of three decades were the warmest experienced for many years and cannot therefore be considered to fall within the "normal".

At the same time, Lamb discreetly qualifies some of the more sweeping theories. Marxism, for example, believes in economic and material determinism. It is not, in theory, the examination of climatic variations since these affect the economy. As for the ideas of Aristotle and Montesquieu, they may partially explain civilization, or its decline, by the climate of the continent in question, but need to be put into perspective: "civilized" capitalism has indeed flourished in temperate climates, but also in the equatorial city of Singapore (cooled, admittedly, by office air-conditioning).

Every historian must first tackle the problem of his sources, and Lamb readily submits to this golden rule. For a start, there are glaciers, well documented thanks to iconography, records and Carbon-14 dating (applied to the trunks of fossil trees which give evidence of previous glacial advances). For the past 100,000 years, and up to including the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, glaciers are consequently a major guide to climatic change. Late wine harvests imply a cold season, and vice versa: early harvests are well documented, year by year, since the start of the fourteenth century and give a considerable amount of information. The same is

true of tree-rings: their annual growth in dry or semi-desert regions is proportional to the humidity occurring in a particular year. Records of events (successions of cold or mild winters, for example), are highly informative when compiled by reliable observers, though this is by no means always the case. Through them, Easton and his colleagues established the existence in the second half of the sixteenth century of the fall in temperature which preceded the great advance of the Alpine glaciers, around 1595-1600; the same evidence also allowed Christian Pfister to make a proper study of the Swiss climate in the eighteenth century. Pollen series in peat-bogs are significant for prehistoric climates, but not from the neolithic onwards, when they were disturbed by land clearance which destroyed trees and replaced their pollen by those of crops with the "invention" of agriculture. Variations in the price of corn, on the other hand, may be variously caused, so graphs illustrating them should not be relied on too much as indicators of variations in climate, except in some obvious cases: the famine of 1709, for example, was directly attributable to the celebrated cold winter in that year.

Lamb boldly starts his survey with the great ice ages. The last recorded of these began gradually 115,000 to 90,000 years ago, then, after some hesitations lasting for periods of between two and five thousand years, finally set in 70,000 years ago and lasted 50,000 years. A short cold snap, 10,800 years ago, lasted a mere six centuries, and started a few small glaciers in the Lake District. The melting of the ice over the past 10,000 years encouraged the beginnings of agriculture and stock-breeding, naturally enough, but cannot be seen as the prime mover in this respect: in Mesopotamia and Palestine, where wheat was first cultivated, glaciers never had any significance at all.

On the other hand, over those ten millennia, for reasons which are easy to understand, the melting of the ice did involve a rise in sea levels: the Pas-de-Calais thus emerged around 7600 BC and the present outline of the French, German and British coasts was more or less fixed around 5000 BC (farewell to the reindeer of Hamburg and to the Copenhagen tundra). The post-glacial heatwave reached 2°C above nineteenth-century temperatures during the so-called "Atlantic" or

"optimal" phase, between 5000 and 3000 BC, before another chill set in, bringing us our present-day climates. All climatic regions (Arctic, temperate, etc.) are now once more shifting southwards. Until around 3500 BC the Sahara still enjoyed the rainfall brought by a few meridional cyclones. From then on, it again dried out, by virtue of what is only apparently a paradox, and this put an end to the extraordinary vegetation seen in the Tassili rock paintings. At the same time, the glaciers once more advanced a little in the Alps. A nascent agriculture certainly took advantage of the pleasant warmth of the Atlantic phase in Europe.

Apart from this, Lamb's other historical speculations about these millennia are often hypothetical: he is well aware of this, judiciously introducing them with phrases like "It may well be that..." or "It is tempting to think that...". Among such hypotheses, one might cite the following (which he does not, of course, take too seriously): that there are stone circles in Britain might suggest that the sky was clearer than it is today; the development of the major religions in the first millennium BC; the appearance of Jesus himself at a "mild" period in climatic history; the emigration of the Italian vine under the Roman Empire to southern Gaul, a region receptive to grapes in any case since it had a basically sunny climate, regardless of minor climatic variations.

Thanks to the many studies which Lamb conveniently draws together, we now have some virtual certainties as far as the Middle Ages are concerned: there was indeed a medieval "mini-optimum", with temperatures comparable to those of the "good" years 1900-1950, or even a little warmer: it is clearly shown in the texts, as in the Greenland and Alpine glaciers, and lasted from roughly 800 to 1200 AD. It certainly favoured the colonization of Greenland by the Vikings in the tenth century and did not hamper - far from it, though one cannot with certainty say more - the great land clearances in western Europe during the eleventh century. It seems to have ended during the thirteenth century, and Lamb tends to explain the great crises of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries by the slight drop in temperatures following this "optimum", which would have meant smaller harvests.

But historians remain cautious about this: the *naïve* conclusion of a cycle of economic growth which started in the eleventh century, culminating around 1300, and the appalling disasters of the late Middle Ages (Black Death and other plagues from 1348, and the Hundred Years' War) were all so overwhelming in their effects that slight variations in climate can only have been decidedly secondary causes. Competition from the Bordeaux vineyards, which had begun to export their product to the British Isles, seems to have been so great that, whatever the climate, the unfortunate English wine-growers could but give in and replace their vines by cereals or pasture. The iron law of profit operated even in the fourteenth century!

Then came the little ice age, so clearly visible in the seventeenth century and affecting the years from roughly 1560 to 1850. Here Lamb is on much surer ground and his solid argument and erudition, supported by the recent discoveries of Christian Pfister, are highly impressive. It is no longer a question of mere conjecture, as in the case of fluctuations in religious life in England during the thirteenth century: in many respects, this is an area of virtual certainties. Around 1600, the Alpine glaciers crushed the most exposed hamlets around Chamonix, marking the start of the new seventeenth-century cold spells which were to continue, though with "sunny intervals", until around 1850. Temperatures during the "bad" decades of the seventeenth century (the worst occurring in the 1690s) may have fallen to an annual average of 0.9°C below the norms for the warmer years 1920-1960. Cold winters and poor summers brought famine, killing off seeds and crops and affecting Scotland, France and Finland especially in the fatal decade of the 1690s. But even here, human agency and simple historical freedom do not lose their rights: English agriculture was already more technically advanced than that of France or Scotland, so the English escaped without too much harm. What was bad for Louis XIV was good for William of Orange.

It should be said at once that the little ice age was no more a single entity than the French Revolution was. There were fine, warm periods within it, for example the mild years 1710 to 1739, which coincided with the economic

revival in western Europe (admittedly also favoured by the inflow of new supplies of Brazilian gold, the end of the great wars and the political thaw which followed the death of Louis XIV). Once ended, these rises in temperature were followed by fresh disturbances, especially when accompanied by volcanic eruptions. Volcanic ash, projected into the atmosphere, intercepts the heat of the sun: in 1815, the eruption of Tambora in the East Indies produced a famine in the East winter and wet summer of 1816-17 and glacial advances in the northern Alps.

As I have said, the recent warm period began in the 1850s and 1860s, and culminated in the 1940s. The mild west and south-west winds became more frequent in Britain from 1860 to 1960 and after 1900 British rivers froze over completely on many fewer occasions than previously. Rainfall was heavier than before over the interior of the old continent, and all the climatic regions (Arctic, temperate, sub-tropical) appeared to be shifting northwards, contracting around the North Pole. This led to a paradoxical consequence: the Antarctic region was also extending northwards, so that there was a precise correlation (0.75) between the increase in mild south-west winds in London and snowfall at the South Pole.

Since the 1950s and more especially in the 1960s, the rise virtually worldwide in temperature has given way once more to some reduction, as part of a more or less irregular cycle: in twenty years, we have lost two-tenths of a degree Centigrade on overall world averages.

A word now on the short and medium-term effects of these climatic variations (the long term is a complete mystery). Leaving aside Greenland and even Iceland, two countries where even a minimal fall in temperature such as occurred in the Middle Ages was enough to threaten an already extremely marginal agriculture and stock-breeding, it is evident that in the leading countries of western Europe (France, Germany, or offshore Scotland), cold winters and wet summers led to shortages. The effect of these on the price of grain could spread over several successive years, as happened during the cold period around and following 1770 in Switzerland (Christian Pfister). Such commonsense observations throw a

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The critic's search

Iain McGilchrist

W. W. ROBSON

The Definition of Literature: and other essays
267pp, Cambridge University Press.
£19.50.
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JOHN NEEDHAM

"The Completest Mode": I. A. Richards and the Continuity of English Literary Criticism
210pp, Edinburgh University Press.
£12.
0 85224 387 1

In a recent article in the *TLS* (December 10), Stanley Fish complains about anti-professionalism, a phenomenon he locates both on what he calls the "right" and on the "left" of the critical scene, presumably leaving Fish himself somewhere in the centre of the picture. A man, you might infer, for the balanced view, with a nicely tuned sense of the gradations of things. For those not up on their Fish, then, the flow of his argument may come as a surprise. In the first place it is hard to avoid qualifying as an anti-professional *à la* Fish. All you need is to believe that "there are new readings that are legitimate because they spring from an honest attempt to come to terms with the experience of the text, and then there are new readings that come into the world only because someone has seized a professional opportunity". Where you are mistaken, Fish explains, is in supposing that you mean something by this distinction. Those of us who imagine we can discriminate between a genuine insight into the nature of an author and a piece of pretentious opportunism are simply confused, because "the two understandings are one". You will never understand why this is so unless you know that Fish has been granted a revelation after years of service in the profession, to the effect that it is the very "prevailing conditions of the profession that determine what could even be thought of as true or relevant or illuminating". Never mind about the point that truth is determined by what we say, not the other way about. It is only too easy to see where Fish may have gathered this impression.

Possibly Fish believes that I have not made an honest attempt to come to terms with the experience of his text, and that I am seizing a professional opportunity, but unfortunately he cannot give vent to his opinion without cutting the ground from under his own feet. Perhaps I ought to be more worried about this than I am. For the moment my attention is held by the fact that an intelligent critic, casting himself in the role of the decent professional, eschewing extremes of "right" and "left", can himself so obviously fall for the simplicity of an extreme position. Fish has a point, if rather a basic one: hardly anything can be considered as entirely independent of the age and society in which it exists. But this is altogether different from the proposition that everything is entirely dependent on the context. Hardly anyone has perfect sight, but this is not to say that we are all as blind as bats. Nothing in this world — or hardly anything — is all or nothing.

Which is where we come to *The Definition of Literature*. This splendid collection of essays, the latest by W. W. Robson, is the perfect antidote to all this nonsense, and it is all the more effectively so because it never treats anything as nonsense. The final essay, for example, is about Yvor Winters, who inspires awe by his sheer dotiness. Although Winters dismisses (among others) Shakespeare, Donne, Milton, Pope, Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Tennyson, Browning, Yeats and Eliot as never having written one great poem, he happily awards the accolade to Gascoigne, Churchill, Tuckerman, Louise Bogan and N. Scott Momaday. Both Robson's choice and his treatment are striking, and give one pause: "Winters's fundamental theses are clearly vulnerable as they stand, and they have attracted much adverse comment. But they should, I think, be treated with a charity which which

Winters does not always extend to other critics". Robson is much too interested in whatever is different to miss something valuable, from however unlikely a quarter.

The first four essays are on major problems of the philosophy of literature — what it is, interpreting it, evaluating it, and appraising the relationship between "realism" and truth. They deal with the very questions raised by Fish (he is not mentioned by name, though he perhaps qualifies as one of the "spectacular literary pontiffs" Robson refers to, who dismiss the concept of intention). "I can never know another person's intended meaning with certainty," writes E. D. Hirsch, "because I cannot get into his head to compare the meaning he intended with the meaning I understand". Robson comments characteristically: "it seems necessary to lay stress on the words 'with certainty'". Or again: "No translation can convey the meaning of its original unchanged; but this does not mean that all translations are equally inaccurate. Some meanings, especially of ancient texts, may be irretrievable, as Heidegger and others have argued. But in that case that is what they are, irretrievable, and we have to accept that the given words have no meaning for us. We are not allowed simply to make it up." Robson has wisely not provided any answers; but he has posed the questions so fairly, clearly, concisely, and completely that there seems to be virtually nothing further to be said on the subjects he discusses.

His aim, however, is modest. Of the critic he says:

His only guides are... historical possibilities, respect for the facts, and, if he is lucky, a certain quality of imagination (so long as it is the same kind of imagination as the author's) which saves him from crass pedestrianism. So far from supposing that his interpretation will be accepted as finally authoritative, or even as a contribution to an ultimate final interpretation, the best he can hope for is that a few readers may think he has made a good or at least a plausible point now and then.

This critique of the critic's role expresses everything that is best in the English tradition. It is at the same time a critique, and the reason that he will never be as popular in the universities as the "spectacular pontiffs" of France and America. This is a pity, because what he offers is incomparably more valuable for establishing a human and humane understanding of literature. When he talks of interpretation, for instance, he puts the slightly tawdry wranglings of some professional critics in a proper perspective — yet entirely without any hint of self-righteousness:

There are the men and women who create stories, poems, plays, who have the power to express and give coherent and enduring form to their imaginings. And there are the men and women who receive these things, who appreciate and enjoy them, and for the time being live in them. Many of the former, undoubtedly thought of themselves as having things to say to the latter. Some of them thought these things were true, and important, even desperately important, and they did their best to convey them in a form their readers would understand. Today these men and women are dead and gone, and the people for whom they wrote in the first place are dead and gone too. Unless there is common ground between the old readers and the new, a "semantic constant", as we might call it, the poet's work is no longer naturally different about what, in the case of a particular work, constitutes its semantic constant. To my mind, here is the most important consideration in the search for it.

The idea of the search is perfect. It suggests movement without certain direction, yet with definite aim; uncompleted, perhaps uncompletable, tentative, serious. The idea is casual, but richly suggestive. Meaning exists

not at a beginning or an end, but in something which goes on between.

And this leads me to my one point of uneasiness. Robson believes in standards — he calls subjectivism "poisonous". As a result he seems to shy away from the concept of particularity in art: once "the unique, the unrepeatable, the irreducible are recognized by literary criticism", there is no longer any way, the argument seems to run, of evaluating literature. But if we can accept that meaning is untranslatable, and depends on the sincerity of the reader's search for it, why should not value do so also? Whom do we need to impress? The word, like the meaning, of a literary work is neither subjective nor objective. It lies in the coming together of two individuals, and is none the less real or important for that. And in any case, the very uniqueness and irreducibility are themselves a sign of artistic stature: to the degree that a work can be called great, to that degree it transcends the criteria by which its greatness might be judged.

The book also contains two essays on Stevenson, one on *The Wind in the Willows*, pieces on Tennyson and Frost, and four on poet-critics: Hopkins, Eliot, Richards and Winters. The aim is "to take conversation about prose and poetry out of the literary and academic world in which it so often takes place and open it up to a broader world of reflective people, whoever and wherever they be". The very choice of subjects is bold and original, and the author's enthusiasm for Stevenson and Grahame would alone

be enough to achieve his aim.

"Imaginative language can be analysed only by imaginative language". The remark might be inspired by Robson's book, and it is in a way the substance of his own comments on Eliot. In fact it comes from John Needham's *"The Completest Mode"*.

The aim of this book is to show the continuity of mainstream English criticism from Johnson to Richards and beyond, principally by offering "an exhaustive study of the historical development of Richards' critical theory and method", together with extended studies of Johnson on the one hand, and Leavis and Eliot on the other. It is thorough, judicious and informative; and its concern could be thought of as the rehabilitation of the eighteenth-century notion of "propriety" in poetic imagery, by showing that it depends on a more intuitively grounded version of the interrelation, made fashionable by the New Critics. One gets rather little of Needham's own views, though where one does, they seem to be most sympathetic towards Johnson, who rarely allowed ingenuity or the mere mechanics of analysis to substitute for critical sensitivity. About Richards, Needham writes: "It is hard to think of any other English critic who might be described as 'major', whose interest in literature is so peripheral". Richards seems often barely to distinguish between poetry and complexity of language. I was reminded of John Bayley's comment that the analytic

critic, confronted with Blake's "satanic mills", might well find the phrase such a "dense ambitious" that it is quite as satisfactory, or preferable. Richards was impressed by an equally contrived line — "O his steel tissue of the sun" — which he found in a poem by G. H. Loe, and his critical exposition of it, like the poem itself, strives somewhat for effect.

It is possible that Needham himself more interested in criticism than literature: he is not above placing the "tennis-balls" scene from *Henry V* before the rewriting of Scott's "Proud Mary". But what critic could have got away with it? Needham praises Johnson's comment on Otello's "false as water" as "water that will support no weight, keep any impression". But why does this point out that Desdemona is as pure as water, as transparent as water-like same time that to Otello she is a blank, as ungraspable as water: that she is his source of life, though in her comes to meet his death; that she is weak, and yet to him as overwhelming as the power of water; and that, as all is said and done, she is as false as water, that is, as true as truth itself. With some lines there is no end, others no beginning. "The thing of it is, Fife had a wife; where is she now?" even Antony's simple line "I am dying, Egypt, dying": such lines are beyond criticism. Like water they are simple and as false, or as true, as water.

Asals devotes a chapter to the comic in O'Connor, but his approach is perhaps too exclusively theoretical. He might have written a more entertaining book, and one nearer to the spirit of the subject, had he cited some of the hilarious passages and linked them to the life. Asals seems aware of this neglect and ends with a tribute to O'Connor's "comedy that animates and enriches her serious fiction everywhere". He follows Robert Fitzgerald in convincingly describing O'Connor's style to her habit of excess which intensified the war within and paradoxically produced excess ("Style," said Yeats, "... comes from, from excess, from that something over and above utility which wrings the heart.") Asals examines O'Connor's contention that she was a prophet and shows interestingly how her writing eluded didacticism in its embrace of a prophetic vision where "there is no room for compromise, moderation is a delusion, and extremists are in touch with reality".

Elsewhere one's quarrels with the careful reading of Flannery O'Connor's fiction are slight. Occasional infelicities are unfortunate, we read of a character's "sleazy hair", and in the next sentence O'Connor's style "badly" thrives "as us"; O'Connor "discovers" "her true medium"; "Mr Head toasts" "a sense of the sacred"; there are "key symbolic overtones"; there are "key images". Early on I gave up counting the number of times "juxtaposition" is used (occasionally altered to "counterpoint"). The editing is less than impeccable. One footnote to Asals relegates to a footnote a long and interesting passage about the tendency of the metaphoric activity in Flannery O'Connor's later work to move towards two poles at once, to strain away from the vision of a distinctively humanistic center. One impulse in her writing is downward, an absorption of the human to the realm of things, of animals and objects; the contrary drive is upward, a touching of the human with the grotesque luminosity of the divine.

Asals writes revealingly about O'Connor's double vision of landscapes and her use of the sacramental and grotesque. For O'Connor we are, even at our best, all grotesques, rendered so by original sin. The vision of the literal in O'Connor is paradoxically also the vision of the grotesque, says the author, who moves knowledgeably over the novels and stories, easily locating the most persuasive illustrations of his points. Among them O'Connor's use of the Double. Throughout, some fine exegeses of the stories make the book useful as a companion volume to Flannery O'Connor's fiction. His description of *Hard To Find* as a type of the Virgin Mary, however, might have provoked the one she directed to a friend who found Freudian symbols in *The Violent Bear It Away*: "My Lord... recover your simplicity. You ain't in Manhattan. Don't inflict that stuff on

Getting the wording right

Michael Carver

NICHOLAS HENDERSON

The Birth of NATO
130pp, Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
£7.95.
0 297 78176 6

In this short book Sir Nicholas Henderson publishes the account of the negotiations which he wrote immediately after the signature of the North Atlantic Treaty on April 4, 1949. As a Secretary in the British Embassy in Washington, he had been a member of the working party which had done the donkey work of drafting for the Committee of Ambassadors — British, French, Canadian, Belgian, Dutch and Luxembourgish — that, together with officials of the United States State Department, was responsible for evolving a method of associating the United States with the defence of Western Europe.

The idea had originated with Ernest Bevin, Britain's Foreign Secretary, when discussions in the Council of Foreign Ministers on the future of Germany resulted in deadlock in December 1947. The Soviet Union's insistence of ensuring that the area of Eastern Europe which her armies had overrun, and to which part of that captured by the American, British and Canadian armies had been added, should be firmly locked within her sphere of influence, had finally been recognized as non-negotiable. Western Europe's confidence that it could resist the extension of Soviet power further west was at a low ebb.

It was fortunate that in Georges Bidault, his French counterpart, Bevin found a strong supporter in his determination to involve the United States on a more lasting basis than that of the presence of her occupation forces in Germany, and that throughout the long and sometimes tortuous negotiations, which continued for sixteen months, the Canadians, in the persons of Louis St. Laurent and Lester Pearson, were also staunch and wise supporters.

Sir Nicholas's account authoritatively disposes of the myth that the North Atlantic Pact was something imposed on Europe by a bellicose America, obsessed with anti-

communism. He shows that it was an uphill struggle to overcome the influences in the American governmental machine which resisted such a fundamental departure from her traditional policy, even though both President Truman and his successive Secretaries of State, George Marshall and Dean Acheson, were strongly in favour. The Russophiles, Charles Bohlen and George Kennan, held important positions in the State Department and were initially opposed to a move which could prejudice their vision of a united Europe. They were reluctant to accept that Russia was determined to ensure that that should not happen, except on her own terms. Their opposition was reinforced by the caution of Under-Secretary Robert Lovett, concerned that the administration should not be committed to anything which could cause trouble on Capitol Hill. It was symptomatic of the way things work in Washington that one of the keys to Vandenberg's highly influential Republican chairmanship of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and a potential candidate in the 1948 presidential election, that the Democrat President Truman should not be able to claim credit for a major anti-communist foreign policy achievement. The Vandenberg Resolution of June 1948 provided a firm base for future progress and a guarantee against backsliding.

The other key was furnished by the American who made the greatest and most consistent contribution, Jack Hickerson of the European Affairs desk at the State Department. At an early stage in discussion of a North Atlantic Pact which might complement the Brussels Treaty, he and Gladwyn Jebb agreed a memorandum, known as the Pentagon Proposals, making four recommendations which a year later formed the main pillars of the North Atlantic Treaty. Lord Gladwyn made other very significant contributions, in formulating the agreed views of the Brussels Treaty Permanent Commission in saving the day in August 1948 by bringing the French round to see sense when their intransigence was on the point of alienating the Americans.

However infuriating the French might have been — and their representatives in Washington, the Ambassador

Henri Bonnet and his deputy Armand Béraud, were often as undiplomatic as only French diplomats can be — their contribution was essential. In the Washington negotiations they appeared to be concerned primarily with acquiring arms from the United States and a guarantee of their security, directed perhaps as much against a resurgence of German power as against the more remote threat from the Soviet Union. But this narrow outlook was balanced by that of "Europeans", like Bidault and Mussigli. Without France the nucleus of a Western European self-help organization could not be created. The original function of the Brussels Treaty was to persuade the Americans that they were not being asked just to provide hand-outs or to commit themselves to coming to the help of Western Europeans who were not prepared to get together to help themselves. "Western Union" might seem to those who participated in it to lack reality without support from across the Atlantic, but it was the essential forerunner of the North Atlantic Alliance.

Much of the argument with the Americans revolved around whether Western Union should be enlarged to include other European nations, buttressed by assurances of general support from the United States. Perhaps separately allied to Britain and Canada in a North Atlantic alliance, or merged with this latter concept, as to all and intents and purposes it eventually was. Skilful British and Canadian diplomacy, helped by the resolution of Hickerson and his colleague Ted Acheson, was instrumental in achieving success in the pursuit of two separate but simultaneous negotiations; the development of a North Atlantic Alliance and the association of the United States with the Brussels Treaty powers. Various hurdles were overcome: the problem of the Scandinavian powers, solved with the help of Norway's firm rejection of Sweden's offer of a neutral Scandinavian block; the question of Italian membership, over which France performed a *volte-face*, partly in the hope of including French North Africa and partly so as to balance the inclusion of Scandinavia; and the question of support for Greece, Turkey and Iran. America's security interest in Greenland, Iceland and the

Azores, was an important link merging the two concepts.

Once Truman had been re-elected and inaugurated in January 1949, the pace quickened. The administration's hesitations disappeared, but the Senate's reluctance to accept any wording that could derogate from its constitutional right to decide on matters of war and peace became a stumbling block, which Dean Acheson skilfully overcame. The Russians also helped by their attempt to isolate Berlin, leading to the airlift, and their crude attempts to intimidate Norway. The contributions of Britain's ambassador in Washington, Oliver Franks, his minister, Derrick Hoyer-Millar, and of Ernest Bevin were decisive. They bided better than they knew. Not only has the alliance lasted longer than most of its initiators expected, but it quickly developed into a much more integrated political and, particularly, military organization than they had envisaged. The only reference in the treaty to any military organization was the establishment of a "defence committee", and the working party drafted the treaty without military advice. It is ironic that it should have been the French, later to reject them, who were the most insistent on emphasizing the military aspects of the proposed alliance, while the Americans and British were reluctant to accept any diminution of the influence of the Anglo-American Combined Chiefs of Staff.

Sir Nicholas's taut, matter-of-fact account is enlivened by sharply etched pen-portraits of his colleagues on the working party and of the members of the "Ambassadors' Committee", regarded by the former as more of a hindrance than a help, a view enshrined in an epitaph composed by one of their number:

IN MEMORY OF
THE SEVEN DEPARTED
IN SPITE OF WHOM
THE PACT WAS DRAFTED.

His story is a reminder of what men can accomplish when they are united in purpose, and determined not to allow themselves or the peoples they represent to become passive playthings of events. It also paints a fascinating picture of skilled diplomats at work, manipulating the tools of their trade — meetings, negotiations and, above all, words.

Cornell

The mendicant orders of the Dominicans and the Franciscans, from the time of their founding in the early thirteenth century, directed and oversaw nearly all the anti-Jewish activities of the Church in the West. As missionaries, professors, and itinerant preachers, the mendicants taught intolerance to clergy and laity; as leaders of the Inquisition, they sought to convert or banish entire Jewish communities. Their actions contributed to the history, prevailing Christian view, based on the writings of Augustine of Hippo, who held that God had ordained the survival of the Jews. In this new book, Jeremy Cohen shows how the friars justified in theological terms their efforts to purge Europe of its Jewish population.

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Taking the stopper out

David Holloway

GEORGE LISKA

Russia and the Road to Appeasement: Cycles of East-West Conflict in War and Peace
261pp, Johns Hopkins University Press.
£18.75.
0 8018 2763 9

When Richard Nixon visited the Soviet Union in the summer of 1974 Brezhnev suggested to him that their two countries sign a treaty whereby each would come to the defence of the other if either were attacked. Nixon was "thrilled". This, he wrote in his diary, "marks of condominium in the most blatant sense." A Soviet-American condominium is what George Liska advocates in this book. His recommendation is a brave one, for if condominium was anathema to Nixon at the height of détente, détente itself is anathema to the Reagan administration. But Liska is not afraid of unpopular terms, for he urges the United States to follow a policy of appeasement towards the Soviet Union.

Liska sees the United States as a declining imperial power, and the Soviet Union as its most likely successor on the world stage. The Reagan administration is trying to mount a wholehearted effort to stop Soviet expansion; but it will not succeed because the United States does not have the will or the spirit to sustain such a policy. The basic question that confronts the United States, therefore, is how, in the face of growing Soviet power, to manage the

integration of the Soviet Union into a viable world order.

Munich is often invoked as a terrible warning to the West to remain strong and to resist Soviet expansion. But Liska rejects the analogy, on the grounds that the structure of international politics is now more like that of the period before 1914. The prelude to the First World War illustrates for him the dangers of trying to deny a place in the sun to an emerging imperial power. If the West does not accommodate Soviet expansion, the best we can hope for is international anarchy. But an effective strategy "for appeasing an ascendant revisionist power"—i.e. Germany in the 1930s or the Soviet Union now—can be implemented as long as it is conducted from strength and as long as the old one, a ruling class in decline should reach an accommodation with its rising successor in order to retain some of its power and to guard against the possibility of revolution by the lower orders, in this case the countries of the Third World.

Unlike most Western writers who try to understand Soviet policy or advocate policy towards the Soviet Union, Liska emphasizes not the structure of the international system, but rather the internal change in the Soviet Union to bring a transformation of foreign policy, the United States can encourage domestic transformation by changing the Soviet Union's international environment. Americans must stop thinking of themselves as exceptional, and of the Russians as abnormal. Only then will a truly conservative, gradualist policy,

based on the lessons of history, be possible.

It is not hard to find objections to Liska's argument. A crucial point is his contention that as condominium is created, the Soviet Union and its policy will change. But as a Soviet reviewer of this book commented (in *The Journal of the Institute of the USA and Canada*), why should the Soviet Union change its foreign policy, when it is that policy that has made it powerful? Second, Brezhnev tried hard in the 1970s to convert strategic parity into a wider political equality with the United States. But if Liska's strategy were adopted, what would equality mean for the Soviet Union? Do the Soviet leaders want to be equal to the United States of the 1980s, or of the 1950s? There is a big difference. Third, there is a historical analogy which, rightly or wrongly, warns Western leaders against the kind of condominium that Liska advocates, and that is the memory of Yalta. Ironically, it was in Yalta that Brezhnev proposed a Soviet-American Treaty to Nixon. But Nixon writes in his memoirs that "since the name 'Yalta' still carried unfavourable connotations we called this the 'Oreanda Summit', after the area in which the dacha is situated".

Liska's polemic, for so he calls it, is couched in very abstract terms, and is based on a philosophy of international relations elaborated in a series of earlier books. The convolutions of his style make this a difficult book to read, and this is a pity because he has interesting things to say, and raises important questions. Liska's argument is not a popular one today, but it deserves to be considered very seriously, in Moscow as well as in Washington.

commentary

Trend-spotters and sinners

Robert Halsband

MLA Convention
Los Angeles

Once upon a time (in 1883) the Modern Language Association of America held its first convention at Columbia College in New York, with forty members attending its four sessions. But that was before the Academic Explosion. From December 27 to 30, 1982, the MLA held its ninety-seventh convention in Los Angeles. To house over 700 sessions and most of the 6,000 members who attended, three downtown hotels were taken over: the Biltmore (mainly for British Literature), the Bonaventure (American literature), and the Hilton (foreign languages).

Seven hundred sessions! Since between two and five papers were presented at each session, the total came to more than 2,000. No wonder the sessions started as early as 8.30 am and ended as late as 10.15 pm. I could only sample a dozen or so meetings, study the titles of papers listed in the Program (120 double-columned pages), and button-hole those I know and eavesdrop on those I don't in an attempt to capture the general atmosphere. The range of topics in literature, criticism and theory was limitless. Not only Germanic and Romance languages, but Slavic, Yiddish, Hungarian, Lithuanian, Romanian, Estonian, Armenian and Arabic; among writers, not only such whales as Shakespeare, Goethe, Proust, Chaucer, Melville, Dickens, Cervantes and Coleridge, but shoals of minnows.

A sampling of the traditional topics: at "Shakespeare and English Comedy, 1600-1720" George Duffy's paper, "What the Dryden-Davenant Tempest Is Really About", linked the play's political content with the English scene in 1667 to its popularity. (Then why did it remain popular through the eighteenth century?) At "Convention and Invention: The Resources of Genre from Spenser to Milton," Barbara Lewalski pursued the angle in *Paradise Lost* to find their literary origins. The session on James Joyce and Virginia Woolf, held in a large auditorium, drew a meagre audience despite the current industry in these two writers. (Trend-spotters may note that the Jane Austen session, at an inconvenient hour, attracted an enormous crowd.) "Literature and the Visual Arts: In Quest of Theory" provoked expectations: one paper analysed a few stills from a film, and another dealt with emblem books. "The Detective in California" contributed to the convention's venue, included a magisterial and elegant paper by Jacques Barzun on the crime fiction of Raymond Chandler. With a more general topic than these, the panel on "Censorship and Society" enlisted several non-academics: John Leonard, book critic of the New York Times, exhibited jewelled prose more fit to be printed than listened to; and Victor Navasky, editor of *The Nation*, spoke with genial good humour of his magazine's censorship problems.

The 1883 or even 1963 convention would have been startled if not shocked by many of the topics and papers: critical theory, whether political (Marxism) or ideological (semiotics, deconstruction), sexual activities and politics, feminism, gay studies, film (now an important adjunct to many English departments), computers and word processors, and unemployment and job retraining. "From Byron to Forster: Responses to 'Homophobia in British Literature'" offered papers on the scandalous "Don Leon", falsely attributed to Byron, and on Forster's posthumous *Maurice*. Among the papers at a workshop called "The Politics of the Woman's Body", one was entitled "The Canon in the Canon: Vaginal Imagery and American Local-Colonial Fiction".

The most dramatic episode I witnessed occurred in "Sexual

Politics", one of whose two listed papers treated sexual differences in writing, and the other "Castration, Authority, and the Politics of Writing" (on Lacan and phallogocentrism). First on the programme, however, a young black woman announced that her unlisted paper was entitled "Ain't I a Woman?" A blazing speaker, she attacked white feminists, including those on the panel, for suppressing their black cohorts. A similar discordant note was struck in the session on "The Sixties: A Reassessment", when the first speaker, a pioneer feminist activist, first ticked off the panel chairman for inviting her as a "token" woman and for not enlisting any black; and then, although I expected her to stalk out in protest, calmly delivered her paper (extracts from her published book). The panel did agree that the main achievement of the 1960s in the United States was the civil rights movement (literature was hardly mentioned). They might have added that a less momentous consequence of the 1960s was the current democratized, politicized and fragmented convention.

Every MLA convention is addressed by its president, a distinguished scholar elected for one year to this honorific office - this time Wayne Booth, best known for his *Rhetoric of Fiction* (1961). After some nostalgic reminiscences, he preached his sermon: that MLA members, instead of writing scholarly books and articles, should direct their energies to teaching students how to write and think clearly and correctly. His audience was certainly made up of sinners in need of salvation - or why would they be at the convention to present papers? - but it's doubtful that many of them will see the light and return to campus eager to teach freshman composition. Most young instructors aspire to escape from what they regard as drudgery by climbing the publications ladder. That hoary cliché "Publish or perish" may be less cogent today when job openings are so few compared to job seekers, many of whom are publishing and perishing, yet it is still the way to rise in the rank and salary. Since most convention expenses only if he or she appears on a programme, this has become a strategy for advancing one's career and for enjoying the facilities and facilities of the occasion. Can it be that the "politics" of careenism has spawned a superabundance of research and critical papers to be read at conventions?

The MLA convention consists of more than papers; as many participants remark, it offers opportunities to see old friends and to meet new ones. Cocktail parties abound, given by some specialist groups on the programme, by university departments and by publishers. Intramural activities also revolve around publishers' book exhibitions - a miniature Frankfurt Book Fair because of the foreign language stalls - where conventioners browse and often buy (at a discount). Computers and word processors now appear in increasing numbers. Also appended to the convention are associations and societies of various kinds. Almost thirty are devoted to individual writers from Lessing (Doris and G.E.) to Dante, from Milton to Beckett. Add to these Esperanto, Radical Caucus, Computers, Folklore, Gay Caucus, Société Rencessals - to demonstrate the scope of academic activity in downtown L.A. Extramural activities include the annual Huntington Library in suburban San Marino, hosted by several sessions, including one at which James Thorpe displayed the Library's rich store of Thoreau manuscripts and books.

Next December: New York, where attendance of 10,000 can be projected. How many papers is anybody's guess. While attending the Censorship panel I had to miss exactly forty other sessions taking place at the same time. The cure for such programme elephantiasis is for M.L.A. to schedule fewer sessions and to choose broader topics of more general interest. These annual meetings are becoming victims of the politics of conventionneering.

Surface impressions

Ronald Hayman

R. B. SHERIDAN
The School for Scandal
Theatre Royal, Haymarket

"Genteel comedy cannot be acted at present", lamented Hazlitt, reviewing the 1815 revival of *The School for Scandal* with Charles Kemble as Charles Surface. "Little Moses, the moneylender, was within a hair's breadth of being the only person in the piece who had the appearance or manners of a gentleman." The propriety of his gestures was reminiscent of the good old times when everyone belonged to a marked class in society, and maintained himself in his characteristic absurdities by a *chevaux-de-frise* of prejudices, forms and ceremonies.

Jonathan Miller's 1972 production at the National tried to push the play away from ceremony by lowering the social tone and larding the text with sub-Hogarthian squalor. We were given a shabby, churlish Sir Peter, glowering scandalmongers, penny-pinching hospitality, pregnant servants and audible interludes with the confident forecast that the production would not transfer to the Haymarket.

Now that this beautiful theatre has once again been reclaimed for the classics, the problem of style has disappeared from style. When Maria seats herself on the floor in a drawing-room, no one reacts as if she had perpetrated an outrageous solecism, and yet no consistent effort is made to disentangle the action from the conventions of the eighteenth century. This is a comedy of manners in which manners count for little. Like Jonathan Miller, John Barton takes pleasure in exposing female baldness that will disappear under an elaborate wig, but at the Haymarket, although most of the furniture in Charles Surface's lodgings has been sold, to be replaced by crates of various sizes, no discarded boxes are drunkenly littering the floor. In the houses of Lady Sneerwell, the Teazles and Joseph Surface,

moneyed elegance is rather perfunctorily suggested with a minimum of furniture and props, which might have been all right if John Barton had achieved a satisfactory balance between words and action, but this is more problematic than it appears to be, and what style there is in this starchy production is determined partly by the stars themselves.

Sheridan had a fine ear for textual detail in the gossip of his backbiters. As depicted by Lady Teazle, a fat dowager, almost lives on acid and small whey; laces herself by pulleys; and often, in the hottest noon in summer, you may see her on a little aquat pony, with her hair plaited up behind like a drummer's and puffing round the Ring on a full trot. It does not help us to digest all this if Lady Teazle - self-confident drawing-room comedienne and not at all the girl from the country - trots around the stage imitating both horse and rider.

Admittedly, Sheridan took more care to make his dialogue entertaining than to keep it in character, but he was alert to the difficulty of integrating description into stage action. In *The Critic* Sir Fretful Plagiary, who steals fine passages from other writers, is told that "he lies on the surface like lumps of mail on a barren moor, encumbering what it is not in their power to fertilize". His bombast is intolerable because "the homeliness of the sentiment stares through the fantastic encumbrance of its fine language like a clown in one of the new uniforms". Sheridan's own sentiments are homelier than Congreve's, for the language or the plotting that fleshes them out. In his five-year theatrical career Sheridan was trying to earn as much money as possible by giving as much pleasure as possible, and there was no question of introducing into a play the ambivalence or the melancholy that bedevilled his life. *The School for Scandal* does contain autobiographical references - to his autocratic father, to his careerist brother and to sexual jealousy - but he was skilful enough not to ruffle the surface of his sentimental comedy. Neatly, the play does its moralizing under the counter while appearing to mock at moralizing by loading pious

platitudes into the mouth of the villain.

Where Sheridan makes statements through action, Barton fails with the screen scene, but it is easy to make it succeed so well as it does here. The timing is perfect. Sir Peter Teazle, Donald Sinden, in his endearing best as he lures the audience to share the chuckling that precedes the long - but not too long - delayed climax in which the screen crashes down to reveal the little French milliner but the disclosure is followed by an eloquent silence in which no one moves.

The sentimentality, then, does stare through the dexterous plotting but the density of Sheridan's detail is unevenly accommodated to the performances dispensed by the stars. With her entertainingly coxcombic and her expressive, laughing gait, Beryl Reid laces each piece of bitchery to high potency, but Dame Gray lacks the vocal incisiveness to save Lady Sneerwell from being scissored. Michael Denison sinks into vaudeville sloop for his appearance as Mr. Stanley, but he speaks his wit with resonance and relief, especially when chortling over his nephew's refusal to part with his portrait. Al Fraser turns in a low-key but effective performance as Rowley, while Orla Gesteow is admirably cast as Moses, but as Joseph Surface Christopher Gough concentrates so hard on appearing to be relaxed that he misses many superb comic opportunities.

A director from the Royal Shakespeare Company might have been expected - whatever other mistakes he made - to encourage his actors into giving the words their full value, but it is in this respect that John Barton lets Sheridan down most seriously. The production would have been better if he had thought more committedly about style, had set a livelier pace, had persuaded the actors to listen to each other more carefully and not to react so mechanically, and had been more imaginative in his use of the stage. But in spite of all this, the play can still be recommended as a worthy one of the best evenings currently available in the London theatre.



An ivory Nativity from Salerno Cathedral, reproduced in Kurt Weltzman's *Studies in the Arts at Sinai (450pp, Princeton University Press, £37.50, paperback £14.00 0 691 03993 3)*.

A glossary of quotations

Richard Combs

Sill of the Night
Various chommas

From the credit titles of his last two films - classically plain with a touch of Bergmanesque severity - the writer-director Robert Benton seems to have been hinting at something similarly classical and severe to follow, psychological truth exposed with a no-nonsense purity of form. In the case of *Kramer vs Kramer*, this was almost always (and not just heartstrings) were tagged in an unclassically obvious (and rather clumsy) way. With *Sill of the Night* one could see this come-on as more playful than pretentious, since the film does involve a kind of Bergman face-to-face - a psychiatrist being gradually drawn to and identified with his disturbed patient - in the context of a murder mystery. But *Sill of the Night* is not after the secrets of a soul; the psycho it wishes to probe is not that of its possibly homicidal husband but of its audience, who can be tempted to participate vicariously in the game, and then suffer the consequences of guilty complicity. The game also is not Bergman breast-beating but Hitchcock cat-and-mouse.

This irony is that Hitchcock imposes his own symbolic precision and thematic consistency, which his would-be imitators (like Brian De Palma) ignore while going for the flashier effects. Robert Benton is not like De Palma, but he seems similarly to have mistaken something that works like Hitchcock for something that works like the Hitchcock. To begin with, it is uncertain who this film is principally about: psychiatrist Sam Rice (Roy Scheider), who loses a patient as a man's lover (while himself suffering the pangs of something "lost", a failed marriage); or the femme fatale herself, Brooke Reynolds (Meryl Streep), who comes to Rice's office in agitation and thereafter seems perpetually caught in some guilty act, a fine, on-edge performance by Streep that is the closest thing in the film to Hitchcock (to one of his febrile, bird-like blondes).

But the script does little to encourage interest in - let alone identification with - either. And its efforts to create a tension between them, as in some extensive prowling round Rice's basement, ending with a shock confrontation, seem the stuff of any run-of-the-mill thriller without Hitchcockian portfolio. The film in fact borders on self-parody as it repeatedly forces its hero to creep trepidatiously into dark places. Even more destructively, unintentionally comic is a rather Feydeau-esque beginning, set in Rice's office, as various people come and go, filling in bits of a labyrinthine plot that has its origins some time before the film starts, interlarded with flashbacks and a dream sequence that belong to the man who is found dead in the very opening scene. Benton, in fact, has boxed himself into the kind of plot that he then has to spend the rest of the film fighting his way out of. In the confusion, he has not bothered to be as scrupulous as Hitchcock would have been about the fact that a vital clue depends on information the audience is not given until the end, or that if Rice is the main character there is little chance of catharsis in the blood-boltered finale, since neither the dream-flashback nor the allied trauma from the past belongs to him. Psychoanalytically, also, the unpeeling of the mystery through dream interpretation does not seem much more sophisticated than Hitchcock's answers opened on that date, or failing that the most nearly correct - in which case inspired guesswork will also be taken into consideration.

Entries, marked "Author, Author 106" on the envelope, should be addressed to the Editor, *The Times Literary Supplement*, Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX. The solution and results will appear on February 18.

1 I kiss my hand
To the stars, lovely-asunder:
Starlight, waft him out of it; and
Glow, glory in thunder.

2 I am a secret mountain
tenebrous, flea-bitten by starlight,
my eyes are gone:
then when you cut my throat it bleeds
with a trickle of alcohol.

3 So in conjecture stands
my starlit body. The mind
mobile as a fox goes round
the sleepers waiting for their
wounds.

The rule of honour and the rule of law

Roger Scruton

Yol
Lumière Cinema

Yilmaz Güney owes his position as the representative Turkish artist to three things: his ideological commitment to the Turkish left, and his consequent status as the voice of the voiceless; his talent as a film director, in a country where the novel has never had sufficient prestige to make the cinema seem like a poor relation; and the glamour of his life, most recently exemplified in October 1981, when he escaped from his island prison in the Sea of Marmara. Güney had been incarcerated for the murder of a judge. While in prison he wrote five films, and directed them by proxy. These films have steadily gained recognition among Western critics, and there is now an accepted image of Güney as a man without hubbub, whose political commitment is as far from salon communism as his films are far from the posturing sentimentalities of *If and Les Quatre Cents Coups*.

Güney's escape provided the Turkish left with much needed propaganda. It came at a time when the military government of General Evren had established the popularity to which recent events bear witness. In such circumstances the war of subversion could be sustained only beyond Turkey's frontiers. As always, the principal task was to capture the "informed public opinion" which holds sway in the West, and there is no better channel to this opinion than "art cinema", which is sufficiently near to television to be widely intelligible, while sufficiently far from television to command the respect of those who recognize that truth and drama are neither easily achieved nor easily comprehended. It comes as no surprise, therefore, to find that Güney's recent films have received wide publicity, and that the presentation of *Yol* at the Lumière Cinema has been the occasion for an extensive propaganda against the "fascist" régime of General Evren, not only in the press, but also in the cinema itself. All this lends credence to the view that Güney's escape was far from miraculous. Either the régime was blind to its consequences - and the

evidence suggests that it was far from blind - or Güney was effectively supported by those with an interest in his cause.

Whatever the explanation, there is reason to be thankful for the aesthetic consequences. *Yol's* predecessor *Sizya* (The Herd) - was brilliantly acted and brilliantly photographed. However, it tortured the viewer with minute upon minute of redundant footage. *Yol* is superficially similar, both in style and in content; it relies heavily on Turkish countryside for its effects, and upon the contrast between rural stasis and urban fluidity for its material. But the situations are now succinctly and dramatically presented, and the effect is so obviously a part of them that the narrative is utterly compelling.

The road referred to in the title is that taken by a group of convicts on a week's leave from their island prison. One is destined for death at the hands of his wife's family, having through cowardice betrayed their son. Another must bear the burden of dishonour on learning of his wife's infidelity. Another returns to his village in Kurdistan, to find that it has become a battle-ground between the militia and Kurdish separatists. He also finds himself bound by immemorial custom, and against his budding love, to marry the widow of a rebel brother. A fourth is trapped into marriage by the unanswerable system of surveillance which has made marriages in the Middle East for centuries. All find themselves constrained by enormous complexities of kinship and custom; in comparison the lenient prison from which they were released comes to seem like home.

The dramatic moments are carefully managed by Şerif Gören, who directed the film under Güney's instructions. The screenplay, by Güney himself, employs simple and indeed somewhat simplified dialogue. The main achievement of Güney's editing lies in his scrupulous avoidance of sentimentality. The only criticism to be made of the result - although it is, I believe, a serious criticism - is that the film relies too heavily upon the cinematic clichés generated by train travel, and by the Asiatic beauties of the landscape. The dividing line between drama and documentary is repeatedly crossed, and the camera work is insufficiently skilful to settle

the resulting question of relevance - the question of which detail, which movement, which figure or image should be attended to.

Yol was shot during the early days of military rule. It is further evidence of Güney's scrupulousness that he avoids the occasion of propaganda, and indeed for the most part portrays the Turkish army as a peace-keeping force, imposing its rough justice upon a country torn by faction. The dramatic sketches concern not the large questions of political order, but the smaller and deeper questions of social cohesion. The convincing portrait of village life, in which disputes are matters of honour rather than justice, shows the enormous gap between the actual conditions of rural Turkey, and the overarching rule of law which Atatürkists (General Evren included) have tried to impose upon it. Güney has too much sympathy for his people not to show how closely their lives depend upon the benighted imperatives of honour and kinship. At the same time he is unable to contain his outrage at the resulting sufferings of women, and unable to share Yasar Kemal's countervailing sense of the support which women receive, in the form of unbreakable domestic affection. Güney concentrates instead upon the cruelty of the code of honour, which denies freedom to women and justice to men.

There is another reason for Güney's representative status. The problem which concerns him is that of the gap between the rule of honour and the rule of law, between ancient piety and modern justice. Such is the theme which the *Orestia* first placed before us. Only in the polis, Aeschylus shows, can the transition from piety to justice be accomplished. For only in the polis is there a public order that can override and extinguish the demands of blood. The transition must therefore be made from honour to law without it there is no rest from the endlessness of human persecution. The truth is well illustrated by the history of modern Turkey; but the tragedy of Turkey is that those, like Güney, who have comprehended the human problem, have so often espoused the inhuman solution of the left. This solution, as Turkey's neighbours know, has never accomplished the passage from honour to justice. On the contrary it has merely abolished both.

Author, Author

Competition No 106

Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than February 11. A prize of £10 is offered for the first correct set of answers opened on that date, or failing that the most nearly correct - in which case inspired guesswork will also be taken into consideration.

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my eyes are gone:
then when you cut my throat it bleeds
with a trickle of alcohol.

3 So in conjecture stands
my starlit body. The mind
mobile as a fox goes round
the sleepers waiting for their
wounds.

Competition No 102
Winner: F. Plesant
Answers:
1 "I. Was Inquiring", said Mr —, resuming the thread of his discourse: "Whether You have Observed in our Streets as We should say, Upon our Pavvy as You would say, any Tokens."

The foreign gentleman, with patient courtesy entreated pardon: "But what was token?"

"Marks", said Mr —, "Signs, you know, Appearances - Traces."
"Ah! Of a Orse?" inquired the foreign gentleman.

Charles Dickens, *Our Mutual Friend*, chapter 11.

2 "Walter, a whisky."
I hate whisky. Every time I take it into my mouth my stomach rises against it, and the stuff they keep here is sure to be particularly vile. I only ordered it because I am going to write about an Englishman: We French are incredibly blackballed and out of date still in some ways. I wonder I didn't ask him at the same time for a pair of tweed knicker-bockers, a pipe,

some long leath, and a set of ginger whiskers.

Katherine Mansfield, "Jo Ne Parle Pas Français".

3 "And pray", said the Captain, "why did you go to a public place without an Englishman?"

"Ma foi, Sir," answered she, "because none of my acquaintance is in town."
"Why then," said he, "I'll tell you what; your best way is to go out of it yourself."
"Pardie, Monsieur," returned she, "and so I shall, for, I promise you, I think the English a France as fast as I can, for I would not live among none of you."
Fanny Buiney, *Evelina*, letter XIV.

ATC ACTORS TOURING COMPANY IS TAKING OVER THE DONMAR WAREHOUSE THEATRE. FOR A SEASON OF FIVE OF ITS BEST PLAYS

UBU From 24 January

"An escalating usurp of absurdity and barbed satire, reminding me of Joe Orton and Spike Milligan's *Quad*." *The Guardian*

5 QUIXOTE From 25 January

"A superb evocation of Cervantes' great tale of romance and everyday life. A disparate tour de force." *The Guardian*

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remainders

Eric Korn

I don't wish to discuss what may still be subjudicial, but there's this man Derek Mahoney who has found King Arthur's Magic Sword. It wasn't in Glastonbury, but - for reasons I'd prefer not even to think about - in the grounds of a house in Enfield - King Arthur's Sword, just what I've been looking for," said Mr Mahoney to himself, or words to that effect. "King Arthur's Sword? That's our gift here at once," said Enfield Borough Council. Mr Mahoney, who may be waiting for flying saucers to land on the Tor or for an interesting offer from breakfast television, said the time wasn't right. Enfield Council, brave fellows, had him put in the poky. "It isn't really King Arthur's Sword," opined an expert from the British Museum's Mythical Weapons Department. "Never mind," said A Councillor of Enfield, a person not noted for humility, magnanimity or romance. "It's still ours and we want it." Mr Mahoney is serving two years: two years while persons more in touch with reality like *** or *** are still at large. Chesterton, though should be living at this hour . . .

A *Ballade of Unlensed Archaeology* As I came ambulating out of Tottenham Hale I spied a hilt protruding from the mire Amidst the cinders and the rustling rail Enhaloed by an old discarded tyre. And on the blade, in letters as of fire Were runes, embossed like notices in Braille: "I am Excalibur," 'gainst my desire The hosts of Enfield never shall prevail."

It spoke of heathens, threshed beneath the fall: the host of Enfield never shall prevail. In song that rang round bell-cote, tower, and spire It spoke of God, good fellowship, Real Ale, This Latin Mass from every soaring choir. "Draw nigh" it urged: so I drew nigh, then nigher, I was resolved and did not flinch or pale.

I seized the sword: to knight-hood I aspire. The hosts of Enfield never shall prevail. The council claim . . . they'd claim the Holy Grail But I obey a summons that is higher And steadfast as an oaktree in a gale I'll stand against the Borough or the Shire.

I would have braved the Dragon or the Pyre; I'm not unmanned, although I lie in gaol. Though I'm encompassed with barbed wire The hosts of Enfield never shall prevail.

ENVOI Prince, draw your fake or imitation sword, Do on your haubergeon of second-class mail: Against the daft Crusaders of the Lord Tho' hosts of Enfield never shall prevail.

I can see a last chapter, too: Mahoney and his few last comrades (one a poet of portentous girth and obscurantist opinions) at bay on Chase Side, after fighting valiantly every step along the Green Lanes from Alderman's Hill to Ponders End ("And yes, good friends, it's time to Ponder Ends"), but who are these thundering down the slopes of Ponders Hill and Silver Street, in creaking armour and on ancient horses, putting to flight the ranks of municipal modernism, amongst whom are distinguished H. Wells, G. Shaw, K. Livingstone (I really don't think he and G. K. C. would have got on at all).

The bookselling caper is a bit sporadic at the moment, so I was thinking of taking up some steeper line of work, the kind that gets you out into the fresh air and that. Accordingly, I've been studying up R. H. Tiltonson's *How to be a Detective, A Complete Textbook* (Kansas City, Mo. 1909). At that time, of course, Kansas City, Mo. was the ne plus ultra of modernity. ("I reckon Kansas City, Mo. is the ne plus ultra of

modernity", one windbronzed Westerner would opine to another. "Yup", his interlocutor would riposte, "they've got about as far as they can go.")

"At some period in every man's life, almost, there has been a desire to become a detective," says the preface, and the book offers succinct guidance: cut a hole in a newspaper to spy through, do not wear a false beard or moustache if you wish to remain inconspicuous, always remember that the criminal is smarter than you. A disproportionate number of pages describe the Bertillon system for measuring a criminal's physical features ("the ear being very pliable, care should be taken not to press the border with the rule"; where partial amputation of the left little finger or left foot has occurred, record the actual measurement of the remaining portion), and there is more about the manufacture of nitro-glycerine than an honest man should need to know.

But there are thirty rewarding pages of famous bank-robbers, mostly with names like Alfalfa Red or Nebraska Tom, though Otto Warwick uses the rather neat near-anagram T. J. Atwork. There are many views of exploded safes, and potted biographies: "Very dangerous. At Large" has become an Evangelist. Dying of Consumption. Would kill at the drop of a hat. "The reason for this last becomes clear when it is mentioned that the modern bank-robber or yeggman 'always wears a dark sweater and a warm undershirt, together with a black, soft felt, flat crowned hat (all names from hat removed)'. They don't use the velvet mask and the large bag labelled SWAG, so you may need to snatch the hat and look under the brim for that tell-tale anonymity. ("My suspicions are confirmed by the absence of nametags. You are the notorious Pat Crowe of notorious fame, described on page 81.") If you do adopt this approach, *take care not to drop the hat, or your life may be in danger.*

Tiltonson is rather contemptuous of the new breed of safeblower, no professionals; his predecessor was a true craftsman "whose kit was so heavy it almost required a wagon to carry it". In those days cracking a safe was an all-night job for three or four men who laboured hard and were usually caught, recalls Tiltonson admiringly. Other matters covered are how to beg ("Jewish working girls are kindhearted and of socialistic tendencies"), how to steal forks from restaurants, the sawdust swindle, the wiretapping game - which turns out to be, precisely, the plot of the movie, *The Sting* - and an elaborate fraud that involves turning up at an isolated farmhouse dressed as a clergyman, followed shortly by an eloping couple who knock, ask for a glass of water, do you happen to know where we could find a reverend gentleman to marry us? What a fortunate coincidence, would you oblige us by acting as witness? Naive rustic agrees, innocently signs large blank cheque concealed under bogus marriage register.

Rich naive rustics are scarcer these days. There's still a crying need for instruction in the finer points of the detecting game, as I found out recently in a nasty encounter with the house-tees in a New York hotel. I used to recommend. They had plainly learnt their dialogue from those movies in which the hero, alone in a strange town, is set up, set upon, or set about by brutal and foul-mouthed hotel detectives: "We'll ask the goddam questions, buddy", was the general tenor of their discourse, interspersed with fraudulent accusations, unable to grasp that a family amnesiac English booklover might have a valid and non-criminal reason for briefly mislaying his whereabouts. I'm still waiting for the written apology, promised the next morning by a brilliantly indifferent management. I refrain from uttering the name of the Hotel, which commemorates a US Statesman who rhymes in N. England with "daft" and here in the South with "graphed" and "nafted" and - rarely - "quafed".

Tiltonson has a chapter on thieves' slang, much of it pre-Dickensian, (glim, shiv, gam, stir, kip, cop, dos) and some of it improbable. Can "kicks" really mean "shoes" as well as "trousers" and "pockets"? Isn't "chronner" a mishearing for "schonner"? Did anyone ever use "oliver" for the moon or "lobster" for "a dead one"?

But he also says (with his characteristic dittography): "the expression that is probably the most common in this new language is hept or josph or jo hept as the user may deem it best to use it. Being hept to anything is knowing about it before. . . One thief may say to his pal 'Are you hept?' or 'Are you josph?' or 'Are you Jo Hept?'; his pal will say 'I'm wise'."

This isn't the earliest record of the word, though it's close: *OED* gives December 1908 for "hept", though "hip" in the same sense goes back to 1904. Tiltonson's derivation from the name of a know-all circus man is traditional, though by 1914 he had become a detective who operated in Cincinnati, and by 1940 a saloon-keeper in Chicago. The *OED* believes none of this.

You won't find "hept" in T. Baron Russell's *Current Americanisms* (nd but about 1895). Russell's qualification seems to be a disservice for variant speech that would give modern lexicographers palpitations: "of course the standard of good English is the same in both countries, and American writers of the first rank do not write, nor do well educated Americans speak, what is jestingly called 'the American Language'". Of "bonetip" and "boneyard" for "cemetery", he remarks "a couple of Americanisms characterized by more than usual elegance, charm, and good taste". He has a lot of condescending fun with "elegant" too, and supposed American euphemisms like "rooster" and "limb" though he can be meatily-mouthed himself. "knocked-up" always means *enante* and is never on any occasion used to mean *fatigued*. What's more interesting is how many words are listed by him as American that we (British) now think of as just words: "bluff", "bliff", "bureau", "blacklist", "blizzard", "break the record".

I shan't expect to find "hept" or "movy star" in *The Second Barnhart Dictionary of New English* (by Barnhart, Steinmetz and Barnhart) which lists no word earlier than 1973.

"lobby", "peter out", "non-committal", "alderwoman" ("jocularly used by the *Pall Mall Gazette* at the time of Miss Cons' election to the L.C.C. . . . apparently without jocular intent from the Chicago *Inter-Ocean*"). The most unexpected word of 1895 is "movy stars"; but it means - think about it - "badlands".

This T. Baron Russell is a dilettantish sort of writer: a novel, *Borlase and Co. A Hundred Years Hence - an optimistic View, and Last Year. The Story of 1890*, published, reasonably enough, in 1891. He isn't, I think, the man I wish to question in connection with a curious pamphlet, *The Case for Agnosticism*, Watts (nd 1890), whose author appears on the title-page as B. Russell. So much do argument and phrasing resemble those of Bertrand Russell at the age of sixteen (in the secret notebook of irreverent speculation he labelled "Greek Exercises") that I thought I had unearthed an unknown treasure; but an expert Russell collector put me right: in advertisements in the year's *Agnostic Annual* the author is called Baron Russell.

I can't find the pamphlet (or another, *The New Fatalism*) listed in the British Library Catalogue. There are aristocratic Russells of all ranks, down to the humble Honourable Francis Rollo, author of *The Artificial Production of Persistent Fog*, but most of them, in that way I have always found mysterious, become Bedford, Tavistock, Amberley or Amphilis. There are unrelated Russells of Liverpool or Killowen, but one was a devout Bible Protestant and the other an equally loyal RC, and published works to prove it. Could T. Baron Russell be our man? Of course, he no more a Baron than James Earl Russell, author of several enthralling books on German educational methodology, is born to the strawberry, or whatever the phrase is.

Among this week's contributors

LORD CARVER'S *War Since 1945* was published in 1980.

LINDA COLLEY is the author of *In Defence of Oligarchy: The Tory Party 1714-60*, 1982.

RICHARD COMBS is the editor of *The British Film Institute's Monthly Bulletin*.

VALENTINE CUNNINGHAM is the editor of *The Penguin Book of Spanish Civil War Verse*, 1980.

R. H. C. DAVIS is Professor of Medieval History at the University of Birmingham.

ALEX de JONGE's books include *The Life and Times of Grigori Rasputin*, 1982.

GEORGE DUBY is Professor of the History of Medieval Societies at the Collège de France.

ROY FOSTER's *Lord Randolph Churchill: A Political Life* was published in 1981.

COLIN GREENLAND is Fellow in Creator of Law at the North East London Polytechnic.

ROBERT HAWSON's *In Anger: Culture in the Cold War 1945-1960* was published in 1981.

J. H. HERTZ is a Senior Mellon Fellow at the National Humanities Center this year and, therefore, distinguished Historian in Residence in Louisa.

LAURENCE HUGHES is a Senior Mellon Fellow at the National Humanities Center this year and, therefore, distinguished Historian in Residence in Louisa.

GARRY O'CONNOR's *Ralph Richardson: an actor's life* was published in 1982.

W. J. WEATHERS' books include *Squaring Off: Mallet v. Bullock*, 1977.

Professing Literature

Sir, - Anthony Burgess (Professing Literature, December 10, 1982) slapped the face of every professor in America; myself among them. His much-needed attack could reform Creative Writing.

Burgess mocks Creative Writing as "boring work", as "sessions in which gits recte . . . vers libre and are appraised by their friends ('Gee, that's good, Janice')". The colleges think the comes a "sinecure . . . a professional subsidy" for serious writers, or a sop to arty-artists types ("exhibitionists"). I'd add, judge any Creative Writing course by the number of Victoria Falls, let alone T. S. Eliots, it produces, and there's no justification for it. "There is nothing", Burgess concludes, "of academic importance" that the professional writer can give to the university.

Wong, Burgess isn't there as a "lecture"; he isn't even there to teach writing. He's there to create, like the other professors, not writers, but readers. Correctly used, Creative Writing is the great invitation to reading. A student who works backstage in films for a year will always return to them with heightened interest; the same goes for a student who works backstage in the novel or poem.

But more: Burgess grieves, as do we all, that departments increasingly "rare" offer only easy, "trendy" authors, and must abandon Pope or *Paradise Lost*. Mr Burgess, there lies the writing teacher's new importance. Why is your class listening to Janice recte vers libre when they could be listening to you recte Milton, and explain his poetics? The writer is one of the few liberal arts professors still in a position to bargain: Why didn't you say, "If you want to learn to create with words, you're going to learn rhythm by

reading Milton, learn dialogue from *Hedda Gabler*, concision from Dante and Chekhov, point-of-view from Chaucer and James." Students you introduce to Chaucer this year, are more likely to enrol in Medieval Lit next year.

Or do you think they'll learn more about writing poetry from hearing Janice? Make Janice photo-copy her poems (call it "lab fee") so they can read, as they should be, and marked up at home. You and John Milton need the class time.

The writing professor is one of the few liberal arts professors to whom the students will grant an audience. He can accept a new role, ambassador, and plead for the humanities, until the other professors are heard again.

Or he can go on listening to Janice.

GEORGE LEONARD.

14461-C Red Hill, Tustin, California 9260.

'The Logic of Natural Language'

Sir, - A brief reply to Professor Sommers (Letters, January 14) should suffice.

In my review I merely cited a pair of Leibniz texts handily available in C. I. Lewis's *Survey*, in English translation: serious scholars should of course read the texts cited in a good historical work, like the Kneales' *Development of Logic*, to have material for an informed opinion about Leibniz's theory of identity.

Sommers now says he never meant to ascribe to Frege use of a term meaning "atomic sentence"; he frequently without giving any reference ascribes to Frege theses about atomic sentences generally.

In discussing my attempt to get him into a "fool's mate" position, Sommers criticizes at length an argument he says I have in my review, about sentences of

the form "An A is a B and it is a C". No such example occurs in my review; indeed, I there say nothing at all about pronouns of back-reference, about which Sommers says I err. A better way of countering my "fool's mate" strategy would have been for Sommers to say: the "Boolean" quantified propositions "Ex.Fx" and "Ex.Fx.Fx" cannot fairly be treated as obtainable by uniform reading of the schemata "p.q" and "p-q". But this counter-move would block Sommers' own move on p197: he there appeals to "mere instances of propositional laws" as proving the equivalence of "Ex.Fx.Fx" and "Ex.Fx.Fx.Fx". It could no longer be safely assumed that these forms are to be got by uniform reading of the schemata "(r.s)-p" and "r-(s-p)", which are indeed equivalent; and we are given no clue to what other "mere instance of propositional laws" Sommers may have in mind.

Much that Sommers says in his book is based on his attributing to me the view that "the genuine logical subject is definite and singular" (p371). In a *Mind* article in 1950, and in one of my later work, I have maintained the very opposite; as indeed I did in my correspondence with Sommers (see p35). He now seems to be acting on the motto: Never explain, never apologize.

PETER GEACH.

3 Richmond Road, Cambridge.

Gandhi

Sir, - S. N. Nanporia (Letters, January 7) suggests that in my review of the film *Gandhi* I put "constructive programme" in quotation marks to indicate that I thought it "idealistic hogwash" (her words). I used quotation marks because this was the term generally used for the programme by Gandhians and others. In describing it as a "heroic attempt to revitalize the Indian village on traditional lines" Mrs

reading Milton, learn dialogue from *Hedda Gabler*, concision from Dante and Chekhov, point-of-view from Chaucer and James." Students you introduce to Chaucer this year, are more likely to enrol in Medieval Lit next year.

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Sommers now says he never meant to ascribe to Frege use of a term meaning "atomic sentence"; he frequently without giving any reference ascribes to Frege theses about atomic sentences generally.

In discussing my attempt to get him into a "fool's mate" position, Sommers criticizes at length an argument he says I have in my review, about sentences of

the form "An A is a B and it is a C". No such example occurs in my review; indeed, I there say nothing at all about pronouns of back-reference, about which Sommers says I err. A better way of countering my "fool's mate" strategy would have been for Sommers to say: the "Boolean" quantified propositions "Ex.Fx" and "Ex.Fx.Fx" cannot fairly be treated as obtainable by uniform reading of the schemata "p.q" and "p-q". But this counter-move would block Sommers' own move on p197: he there appeals to "mere instances of propositional laws" as proving the equivalence of "Ex.Fx.Fx" and "Ex.Fx.Fx.Fx". It could no longer be safely assumed that these forms are to be got by uniform reading of the schemata "(r.s)-p" and "r-(s-p)", which are indeed equivalent; and we are given no clue to what other "mere instance of propositional laws" Sommers may have in mind.

Much that Sommers says in his book is based on his attributing to me the view that "the genuine logical subject is definite and singular" (p371). In a *Mind* article in 1950, and in one of my later work, I have maintained the very opposite; as indeed I did in my correspondence with Sommers (see p35). He now seems to be acting on the motto: Never explain, never apologize.

PETER GEACH.

3 Richmond Road, Cambridge.

Gandhi

Sir, - S. N. Nanporia (Letters, January 7) suggests that in my review of the film *Gandhi* I put "constructive programme" in quotation marks to indicate that I thought it "idealistic hogwash" (her words). I used quotation marks because this was the term generally used for the programme by Gandhians and others. In describing it as a "heroic attempt to revitalize the Indian village on traditional lines" Mrs

Nanporia is in fact quoting my own words. However, I think it important to ask whether it was economically viable, and the extent to which Gandhi's ashram itself and other such activities depended on contributions from Hindu millionaires is surely relevant. My point was that by ignoring such matters as Gandhi's relations with the great Hindu millionaires the film neglected such questions, and, indeed, a significant part of his life.

KENNETH BALLHATCHET.

School of Oriental and African Studies, Malet Street, London WC1.

'Potpourri from the Thirties'

Sir, - The generous review (December 24, 1982) of my *Potpourri from the Thirties* by so perceptive a critic as Alastair Forbes ought perhaps not to be looked in the mouth; but I am charged with careless spelling by rendering "kolkoz" as "Coll Horse" whereas I was simply transcribing from my diary of 1936 (amusingly I thought) the sounds which had seemed to fall from the lips of our Intourist guide. In other places unconventional spellings from the old diaries were retained for the same kind of reason. As for "Hot-Lunch Johnson" my interest was in the angle of Waugh's humour rather than in the identity of the person so nicknamed for his invitation to a hot lunch. It seemed to me best to conceal the identity under a pseudonym, though Alastair Forbes has now split the beans. But Johnson was no misprint.

I am however guilty of having misspelt my cousin's cousin the late Tom Goff, so justly celebrated for his harpsichords - a disgraceful lapse which Mr Forbes kindly passed over in silence. *Mea culpa*.

BRYAN GUINNESS.

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Groton House, 330 Dover Road, Walmer, Deal, Kent.

JULIAN SYMONS.

to the editor

to the editor

Jack Gallagher

Sir, - I think V. G. Kiernan in his review of Jack Gallagher's *The Decline, Revival and Fall of the British Empire* (January 7) is being rather uncharitable when he implies that Gallagher destroyed himself "by an unwholesome manner of living, including too much whisky". In the course of the last two years of his life, Jack underwent one amputation and was threatened with another. With great fortitude, he managed to come to terms with his artificial leg, negotiating the many steep steps leading to the Hall of his College. To the very last, he retained his good humour and his enormous sense of fun. He also continued to lecture right up to the last crisis. Your reviewer also misses the point about April 1, chosen most appropriately by Dr Seal for his preface; it was Jack's birthday; he never failed to remind his many friends that he was born on All Fools' Day.

RICHARD COBB.

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Buer

Sir, - I should have checked on the spelling "bewater" in Partridge (Letters, December 24), especially since the Oxford supplement which I used gives this, along with "buor", as a possible spelling; but this does not affect the point I was making, which is that the word is unlikely to have been used by a Brighton racecourse gang in the 1930s. Partridge calls the word "rare and obsolete", and as I said, the only modern use given in the Oxford supplement is in *Brighton Rock*.

JULIAN SYMONS.

Groton House, 330 Dover Road, Walmer, Deal, Kent.

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Generations of kings

Georges Duby

ANDREW W. LEWIS

Royal Succession in Capetian France: Studies on Familial Order and the State

356pp. Harvard University Press. £25.90. 0 674 77985 1

Not since the work of Joseph Strayer has research been done by an American into medieval France which is fresher, more pertinent or more stimulating than that whose fruits are to be found in this book by Andrew W. Lewis. Its singular merit, as the subtitle stresses, is to come at the subject from two different directions: the political – What is royalty? What was the State between the tenth and the beginning of the fourteenth century? – and the anthropological – What were the relations of kinship among the ruling class at that time?

Lewis has in fact started out from a very precise question which stands foursquare within the French historiographical tradition: for the past 200 years at least, the activities of the Capetians have been studied from the vantage-point of a France one and indivisible. Historians have thus tried to see these kings as the first artisans of French unity, building it patiently upon one piece of territory at a time, like peasants. But there was in fact a break in this process of accumulation: Louis VIII split up what his father Philip Augustus had conquered and distributed the parts among his younger sons as appanages. How to explain this accident, which was, as it happens, repaired by succeeding generations?

By the time Lewis posed this question anew, historians had learnt from the anthropologists that one of the surest ways to increase their understanding of ancient societies was to examine family relations. He undertook therefore to look at the manner in which Louis VIII's ancestors had been married, had married off their children and had settled their succession. He soon realized that they had behaved like the dukes and the counts, like their neighbours, their relatives and their vassals; that since the time of Hugues Capet the royal office, that sacred, apparently elective dignity, had been treated as an *honour*, as for several generations past had been the function of duke of France, of which Hugues was the heir, a function regularly passed down from the father to the eldest son, together with the whole of the ancestral patrimony.

At the advent of the Capetians, the aristocracy as a whole in northern France tended in fact to be organized in

lineages or dynasties, in *Geschlechten* as Lewis puts it (though why use this Germanic term, unless to pay homage to German historians like Karl Schmid and others of Tallenbach's pupils, who first demonstrated this mutation in family relations?). The Capetians, like all the princes of the kingdom (except perhaps the Norman counts; I think one might dispute Lewis's interpretation of the assertions of Dudo of Saint-Quentin), thought that the eldest son, designated to succeed them by the very name attributed to him at the time of his birth, should when they died replace them at the head of the household. They were convinced that the crown belonged to him by right, along with the domain as a whole. If they associated him with the throne and had him crowned in their own lifetime, this was not out of political weakness, or fear that the royal office might be usurped by another line, but in order to guarantee the rights of the firstborn against the possible claims of his brothers. They took care moreover, as good fathers, to establish their younger sons securely also, either by finding a place for them in the Church, or by marrying them to a rich heiress, or else by making over to them recently acquired possessions – without reducing the patrimony.

In the light of Lewis's researches, the reign of Philip Augustus appears even more clearly as a major step in the evolution of the French monarchy. Large-scale changes can be discerned in the conception of the royal dignity, though succession practices continued unchanged, following the general rule. Louis VIII was still following this rule in 1223-25 when he dipped into his enormous paternal acquisitions and endowed all those of his sons whom he had not destined to the service of God. Forming appanages was not an accident, which was, as it happens, repaired by succeeding generations?

His application to the royal house was brought about by circumstances, but in the course of the thirteenth century it led, over the generations, to a necessary and progressive coalescence of the males of the line, who were brought together by their respect for a moral imperative, by the feeling that they were co-participants, around the fleur-de-lis, in the virtues transmitted by their blood and, ultimately, all "sons of France", coheirs to the kingdom.

This evolution of affective relations within the lineage, accompanied by an exaltation of the royal function and the promotion of France above all the political formations of Christendom,

meant that the family of Capet ceased to be merely one family among others when, in the first quarter of the fourteenth century, it was solemnly declared that only one man could occupy the place of Saint Louis and Charlemagne on the throne of France. Up until that point its destiny had been drastically determined by family practices prevalent among the ruling class, and throughout the Capets' history these practices had constituted the formal framework of a political adventure.

Lewis's book thus anticipates the propositions recently put forward by French anthropologists, notably Maurice Godelier, for whom kinship structures in traditional societies are not to be classed among the "superstructures" but, on the contrary, taken as the true "relations of production". Without ever theorizing, Lewis provides the proof of such propositions; and brilliantly. He is well served by a dazzling erudition – he has read everything – and by the care he has taken to widen the field of his investigation, so that he gives attention not only to texts but also to images, whether over the arrangement of a genealogical tree on the manuscript of Gilles de Paris's *Karolus* or first Saint Louis's and then Philip the Fair's ordering of the tombs in the burial-ground of Saint-Denis. The book's interest is not limited to its meticulous and convincing analysis of a system which, over the centuries and in connection with a semi-liturgical power which set the sovereign apart from all other potentates, his rivals, brought into play a double social structure common to the aristocracy as a whole: lineage and the relationship of one man to another upheld by the *fiat*. It is packed as well with valuable comments on myths of origin, on the attitude of Capetian kings to the prestige of their Carolingian predecessors, on chancellery customs, and on the attributes of royal sanctity.

Of the reflections which Lewis's book has inspired in me I pick out these here, as incitements to further research. The first concerns relations between feudal vassals. My own feeling is that the consolidation of the feudal right in the north of France, and consequently its decisive insertion into the armatures of the monarchical order, do not occur before the reign of Louis VII, which seems to me to confer an even greater symbolic value on the ceremony of 1169, when Henry the Young, son of Henry Plantagenet, an adolescent of thirteen and therefore already mature, knelt in homage before Philip, who was a child of three and a half only but held presumptive to the crown. Second, bearing in mind Helgaud and Robert



Having it written all over his face, Louis (Known as Louis le Pieux or le Dabonnairre) submerged under pious words while dressed in a half Germanic, half Byzantine costume in the manuscript of the poem *De Laudibus Sanctae Crucis* by Raban Maur, the abbot of Fulda. The illustration is taken from Le Moyen Age: les mondes nouveaux 350-900 by Robert Foster (1944, Paris: Armand Collin. 2 200 37046 6).

II, I would set an earlier date than Lewis does on the tendency to sanctify the royal dignity. Finally, I wonder whether the system so finely described in this book would have worked so successfully but for biological chance. What changed with Louis VIII was that he had produced a number of sons who survived him. His father Philip, at the crucial moment, had had only sisters – he had a brother but he was the product of a reputedly adulterous union. A hundred years earlier, Louis VI had been in the same position. This being so, ecclesiastical censure and the transformations imposed by the Church at the end of the eleventh century on matrimonial customs also intervened in the functioning of Lewis's model. Nor should we forget that Philip the First, excommunicated

in the eleventh century. The transformation which Bates describes does denote something new, since it involved both the territorial localization of the nobility and a new hereditary system. Though it is probable that quite a large proportion of the eleventh-century nobility could have been descended from earlier nobles, such as that of the duke, it is known that there were also new families such as the Tosnys, of Belenès, the Cloues, the Palens, the Tessons or the Boquenques which sprang from men who had migrated into Normandy from other parts of France, or even Germany. In the explanation of their arrival is that they were attracted by the opportunities for acquiring land, since the dukes of Normandy, being engaged in aggressive wars, were happy to receive and reward men who were first-class warriors.

Bates will have none of this because he believes that the Normans had no war before 1050. The reason given for this belief is that the "Norman" necessarily Scandinavian but fitted into a "wider French movement", but it is perfectly possible to agree with this statement about Italy, and yet insist that in and around Normandy itself the Normans did possess a "special and

HISTORY

FERNAND BRAUDEL

Civilization and Capitalism 15th-18th Century: Volume 2, The Wheels of Commerce

Translated by Sian Reynolds
670pp. Collins. £17.50.
000216132 X

Here, once again, are the majestic vision, the exceptional breadth, the poetic touch and amusing asides which all historians know, and some cherish, in the work of Fernand Braudel. This volume, originally published in France in 1979 under the title *Les Jeux de l'Échange*, is the second in a series of three embracing nothing less than the entire social and economic evolution of medieval and modern Europe down to the Industrial Revolution. The series seeks to set before us the mechanics of several of the most decisive shifts in the story of mankind. The first volume, *The Structures of Everyday Life*, professed what Braudel calls the "ground-level of material life", the underlying and only slowly changing demographic and agrarian bedrock of pre-industrial society. In classic Braudelian manner, this second volume deals with the next level up, the medium-term, relatively faster shifts which, as the master sees it, need to be identified and separated both from the long-term movements below and from what lies above – the surface froth of mere events which form the uppermost story of the Braudelian edifice. The approach and terminology are familiar from Braudel's first major publication, *The Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, which received more lavish international acclaim probably than any other historical work published this century. With this new series, Braudel is pushing further along the path he showed us then. In effect, he has replaced our traditional concept of "history" with a very different conceptual framework, involving distinct historical processes, moving on diverse levels at various speeds. He has switched from "history" to "histories".

In this second volume, then, Braudel takes us to the world of markets, trade, and cultural generalizations on millennialism, siege mentality, the nature of violence and other aspects of revolutionary behaviour in early modern society. It is an essay in the new *histoire des mentalités* and as such perhaps not so much a "complete rejection of contemporary social science as a shift away from the models of economics, politics and sociology to the questions asked by social and cultural anthropology and social psychology."

Perez Zagorin is not only just as hostile as Braudel to the now classical social science approach but he starts his book with a frontal attack on it. First, there is the word revolution itself. It has been virtually emptied of meaning, he argues, by being applied to any important change in almost any field, from the price revolution to the scientific revolution. At the same time, the scientific revolution and other progressive-minded historians have invested the word with a teleological connotation which has introduced mythical value judgments into historical analysis. The usages have been confusion, a confusion compounded by the erection of the French Revolution into a paradigm by which all other revolutions are judged or, in the case of the pre-1789 ones, given high or low marks for approaching its standards. Professor Zagorin has no difficulty in showing that there is no logical reason why the French Revolution should be taken as more paradigmatic than any other. Equally, he does not believe that revolution can be distinguished from rebellion for this is a "category mistake", an attempt to distinguish the whole from one of its parts, "as one might try, for example, to distinguish violence from war or mammals from whales".

It looks as if a historiographical tide is turning. For nearly thirty years historians have tried to explain the crises, rebellions and revolutions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in terms of methodological theories and models taken over from social scientists. The effort has always been fascinating, sometimes historically illuminating, but in the end inconclusive. We now have two major works which reject this approach root and branch. Y.-M. Berce's *Revoltes et révolutions dans l'Europe moderne, XVI-XVIII siècles* (Paris, 1980) does not even deny to discuss such theories or to bother with a definition of the word "revolution". Professor Berce simply by-passes such problems by following the usage of traditional historians. Thus the revolt of the Netherlands and the English civil war are for him revolutions and any established authority is a rebellion. Having rejected any overall social-economic analysis, he constructs instead a whole series of revolutionary

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to show that the revolutions of early modern Europe cannot be "simply classified according to, or covered by, a model of revolutions based on more modern experience, Zagorin gives us a short analysis of early modern society, a "society of orders" as distinct from the modern class society. This is not of course new, but it is a necessary exercise and it is very well done. Having cleared the decks of theoretical confusion, Zagorin

Jonathan Israel

and titles are doubtless just misprints, but it hardly inspires confidence to find Baron Lopes Suasso, a leading Amsterdam financier of the seventeenth century, twice referred to as "Baron Jouasso".

On Central Europe, Braudel is again generally weak. There are only one or two passing references to Hamburg, one of Europe's greatest commercial and financial centres of the early modern period, and no reference at all to the Hamburg Bank (founded 1619) which, before the Bank of England, was the second most important banking institution after Amsterdam, in northern Europe. Poor Lübeck, head of the Hanseatic League, receives no mention at all. Frankfurt, the most flourishing inland money and commodity exchange in western Germany is dismissed in two or three insipid remarks which tell us next to nothing. Quite apart from the superficiality of what Braudel says about Germany and Austria there are lots of errors. He states, for instance, that sugar-refining began at Hamburg in 1674 though there is clear evidence of sugar refineries at Hamburg as well as neighbouring Glückstadt in the early seventeenth century.

With his habitual wide view, Braudel perceives that the Jews are of great importance to any proper understanding of early modern European history. In contrast to most existing surveys of the period, which prefer to leave the Jews out of it as far as possible, Braudel has quite a lot to say about them. This indeed is a step forward. But what, one wonders, is the use of introducing the Jews to the debate in a bold and novel manner when his pronouncements on this subject are full of error and distortion? He asserts (p. 159) that the "eclipse of the Sephardic Jews ushered in a period of not total silence at least of relative decline for Jewish merchants everywhere". According to Braudel, the rise of the "Court Jews" of Germany and Austria came only later. This, not to put too fine a point on it, is nonsense. It is elementary to any proper understanding of European Jewry between 1500 and 1800 to grasp that the height of Sephardic influence (1650-1725) coincided almost exactly

with the golden age of the "Court Jews" and of Central European Jewry generally.

On Britain, Braudel is so shallow that I presume that no one will take what he says seriously. As one would expect, he is indeed more competent on his familiar terrain, that of the Mediterranean world. But is it good enough to go on reiterating, as nearly all of us do, that Braudel is the greatest living historian and that what he writes on the Mediterranean must be mastery? We have all been conditioned, by years of orchestrated fanfares the world over, to applaud and praise Braudel first and ask questions – if at all – afterwards. The fact is he constantly side-steps key issues and is prone to major errors in what he does say. It is a moot point, for instance, whether Braudel has ever said anything significant about the decline of Spain's trade, industry and shipping in the early modern period, but he certainly makes no attempt to enter into Spanish economic problems here. He discusses Portuguese economic penetration of Spanish America in the 1580-1640 period in some detail, suggesting that "without it, Portugal might not have reassessed herself in 1640, that is regained her independence from Spain". But this is to labour under a basic misapprehension. The Portuguese merchants in Spanish America were New Christians, often crypto-Jews, who for the most part had cut their links with Portugal. Their trading partners were in Spain, Italy and the Netherlands. Their families did not remit wealth back to Portugal where their background was known to the Inquisition. On the contrary, the whole trend among the New Christians was to extract wealth from Portugal.

The mistakes and distortions which abound in all Braudel's work are not so much incidental as inherent in his method. In his very approach to historical studies, for he will identify his long and medium-term patterns and cycles irrespective of events and policies, of political and military power. What confronts us in Braudel is a systematic disregard of the actions of statesmen and the impact of alliances, treaties and blockades. Occasionally

he stumbles awkwardly up against the fatal contradictions in his own method. The lasting shift of economic power from the Spanish Netherlands (Antwerp) to Amsterdam at the end of the sixteenth century he pushes aside as "in part a question of chronology and short-term economic climate". The breath-taking absurdity of such a remark will surely dawn on whoever pauses to decode the jargon. To my way of thinking it also neatly illustrates the reality that at bottom Braudel, for all his qualities, has an essentially unhistorical mind. His attempt to reduce history to a kind of geography is undoubtedly grandiose but I would seriously question how far it is either valid or helpful. The way forward, surely, is to relate events to processes not to separate them.

Of course, none of this will prevent *The Wheels of Commerce* being hailed along with the rest of Braudel's massive volumes as a consummate masterpiece. The dogma within the profession that Braudel is "Indisputably the greatest of living historians" emanates from an international chorus highly placed and numerous enough to stifle all objections. In reference to this latest volume, J. H. Plumb has even urged his colleagues to stand up and "demand a Nobel Prize for Braudel".

The poor layman may easily be forgiven for believing, since so many of our best known historians have affixed their imprimatur to Braudel's much advertised "greatness", that there can be no possible doubt about it. Yet the layman should pause to consider that, however distinguished in their own fields, few if any of the household names who acclaim Braudel in such ringing phrases have any expert knowledge of early modern European social and economic history. Whatever the senior professors in other fields of history may say, few if any scholars who do specialize in this subject are likely to regard this book as great or even impressive history. My own verdict is that it is mostly superficial and at times awful. What is more, our present compulsive urge as a profession to praise such work to the skies can in the long run reflect little credit on either our judgment or our erudition.

From Scandinavians into Franks

R. H. C. Davis

DAVID BATES

Normandy before 1066
287pp. Longman. £6.95.
0 582 48492 8

Seventy-five years ago "English" historians thought that feudalism was developed in Normandy and introduced into England as a complete social system by William the Conqueror. In 1891 J. H. Round believed that he had "proved" this to be the case, and in the early years of the twentieth century the researches of C. H. Haskins seemed to be confirming Round's conclusion. Now most historians would hesitate to accept it and would in any case consider it no longer a matter of the first importance. Thus in *Normandy before 1066* David Bates restricts himself to seven pages on knights' service and devotes the greater part of his text to the new view of Normandy which has been developed by continental historians since 1945.

Much of this new work will be unfamiliar to non-specialists in England because, though it had been begun before 1964 and was duly discussed by David C. Douglas in his *William the Conqueror*, few people

then realized how far the new developments would go. On the one hand there had been the place-name studies of Adigard des Gauries, insisting on the recurrence of Scandinavian elements, and on the other the documentary researches of J.-F. Lemarignier, L. Mussel, J. Yver and K. F. Werner which stressed the constitutional and social similarities between Normandy and the other principalities of northern France. The pace of these documentary researches has quickened since the publication, in 1961, of Marie Fauroux's edition of the charters of the dukes of Normandy between 911 and 1066 and with the parallel work of O. Guillot on Anjou and E. Warlop on Flanders. It is not too much to say that a new structure has now emerged.

Dr Bates's book is both a very welcome survey of this new work and a contribution to knowledge in its own right. He divides his book into two very unequal parts. Part one (forty-three pages) is more like a Prologue, dealing with the tenth century. Part two (205 pages) deals with the eleventh century down to 1066 and is divided into five chapters. "Normandy and its neighbours" (primarily narrative), "Economy and Social Structure", "Ducal Government", "The Church" and "Achievements" (which is attributed to the "personal skill and authority" of William the Conqueror).

Behind this structure, and partly concealed by it, is a new periodization of Norman history. The first period (911-60) was marked by Scandinavian immigration and settlement on a scale sufficiently large to include a "sizeable peasant influx". In the second (960-1025) the Scandinavian element was gradually absorbed into the Frankish environment, the process being finally completed in the turbulence of the third period (1025-50), which also witnessed the disintegration of ducal government and the transformation of the aristocracy, which Bates refuses to call "new". Finally, between 1050 and 1066 ducal power was rehabilitated, the bishoprics revived and a new policy of military aggression developed by William the Conqueror who, since this book ends before 1066, is never styled (king) William I but only (duke) William II.

Though there can be no doubt that in general this thesis will prove acceptable, there are some points on which there is room for differences of opinion and fruitful discussion. The argument I remain unconvinced by the argument from place-names that the Scandinavian settlement of the tenth century was "far more than a take-over by a military elite". Nor am I entirely persuaded that Douglas was wrong to refer to a "new" aristocracy

exceptional aptitude for war". Certainly they liked to think so, because Dudo, writing between 1015 and 1026, made the duke's enemies accuse him of threatening, devastating or conquering the Burgundians, Aquitanians, Bretons, Flemish, English, Scots and Irish, let alone the French. It is perhaps a weakness of Bates's thesis that in the last resort the greatness of Normandy has to be explained by the personal qualities of Duke William II who emerges in the Epilogue as a *deus ex machina*.

That said, it remains that Bates has written a very good book, and that all historians of the Norman period will be grateful to him. There are excellent passages on the Norman Church (the Bayeux having been the starting-point of Bates's research) and on coinage, especially the Pécamp hoard. There are eleven interesting and original maps, and useful appendices on the chronology of 1048 and 1102, against Anjou between 1048 and 1102, the supposed "feudal" documents of Duke William II's reign, and a list of Norman archdeacons before c. 1080. In a future edition it might also be useful to have lists of bishops, viccounts and vicomtes, and even of the dukes themselves. In the meantime we cannot be grateful to Dr Bates for his comprehensive survey and aptly chosen exposition. It will be much used and much quoted.

The forms of insurgency

H. G. Koenigsberger

PEREZ ZAGORIN

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0 521 24472 2

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0 521 24473 0
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It looks as if a historiographical tide is turning. For nearly thirty years historians have tried to explain the crises, rebellions and revolutions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in terms of methodological theories and models taken over from social scientists. The effort has always been fascinating, sometimes historically illuminating, but in the end inconclusive. We now have two major works which reject this approach root and branch. Y.-M. Berce's *Revoltes et révolutions dans l'Europe moderne, XVI-XVIII siècles* (Paris, 1980) does not even deny to discuss such theories or to bother with a definition of the word "revolution". Professor Berce simply by-passes such problems by following the usage of traditional historians. Thus the revolt of the Netherlands and the English civil war are for him revolutions and any established authority is a rebellion. Having rejected any overall social-economic analysis, he constructs instead a whole series of revolutionary

and cultural generalizations on millennialism, siege mentality, the nature of violence and other aspects of revolutionary behaviour in early modern society. It is an essay in the new *histoire des mentalités* and as such perhaps not so much a "complete rejection of contemporary social science as a shift away from the models of economics, politics and sociology to the questions asked by social and cultural anthropology and social psychology."

Perez Zagorin is not only just as hostile as Braudel to the now classical social science approach but he starts his book with a frontal attack on it. First, there is the word revolution itself. It has been virtually emptied of meaning, he argues, by being applied to any important change in almost any field, from the price revolution to the scientific revolution. At the same time, the scientific revolution and other progressive-minded historians have invested the word with a teleological connotation which has introduced mythical value judgments into historical analysis. The usages have been confusion, a confusion compounded by the erection of the French Revolution into a paradigm by which all other revolutions are judged or, in the case of the pre-1789 ones, given high or low marks for approaching its standards. Professor Zagorin has no difficulty in showing that there is no logical reason why the French Revolution should be taken as more paradigmatic than any other. Equally, he does not believe that revolution can be distinguished from rebellion for this is a "category mistake", an attempt to distinguish the whole from one of its parts, "as one might try, for example, to distinguish violence from war or mammals from whales".

Zagorin is equally brisk in dismissing the modern typologies of revolution, from Marx to Sorokin and Chalmers Johnson. They all attempt a universal typology. But is this possible when both their functional analysis is based on a logical misconception and, in actual fact, revolutions occur in societies which have basically different structures and dynamics? The logical misconception occurs in the notion of the equilibrium and disequilibrium of a society. If it is held that the non-revolutionary society is in equilibrium, this statement can only mean that it functions, which we know anyway, but not what the equilibrium is. We also know that every society has degrees of dysfunction, things which don't work. But when do they lead to revolution? The answer generally given is the J-curve or the phenomenon of disappointed expectations which, according to Toqueville, has often been observed by historians to "precede a revolution". The J-curve, then, might at most state a necessary condition of revolution, but only one – even this formulation is too generous. The J-curve is sometimes a condition of revolution but in other cases it is not, as Zagorin shows in some of his own examples. In other words, it is not a necessary, let alone a sufficient, condition of revolution.

To show that the revolutions of early modern Europe cannot be "simply classified according to, or covered by, a model of revolutions based on more modern experience, Zagorin gives us a short analysis of early modern society, a "society of orders" as distinct from the modern class society. This is not of course new, but it is a necessary exercise and it is very well done. Having cleared the decks of theoretical confusion, Zagorin

produces his own typology of revolution in early modern Europe. He arrives at this typology by looking for five criteria: the socio-economic position of the rebels; the geographic focus and extent of their action; their aims; whether explicit or not; the forms of rebel organization; and the rebels' beliefs and mentality. Using these criteria, he arrives at five basic types of revolution: the conspiracy and coup, generally limited to aristocratic elites; urban rebellions, either by plebeian groups, against the urban elites, or by the urban community against external state authority; peasant rebellions against landlords and/or state authority; rebellions by provinces, regions, or dependent realms against the central monarchy; and finally kingdom-wide civil war with aristocratic leadership against the monarchy and involving the whole kingdom. In this schema millennialism, revolt, often seen as a separate type, is rather a projection within and modality of other types of revolution.

This typology, determines the structure of the rest of the book, by far its greater part. Zagorin deals only with western and southern Europe: the British Isles, the Netherlands, France, Spain and Italy. He is of course, silly that he has left out central, northern and eastern Europe, except for the German peasant war of 1525; but otherwise an already large and linguistically demanding task would not doubt have become unmanageable. For we are given nothing less than histories of the most important agrarian and urban rebellions of early modern Europe, those of the major provinces, and regional rebellions together with those of dependent kingdoms: Aragon, Catalonia, Portugal, Scotland and Ireland. He really ought to have had Bohemia

herel – and, finally, the four "revolutionary civil wars", the French wars of religion, the revolt of the Netherlands, the English civil war and the Fronde.

It does not make altogether easy reading. Without the sweeping theories and comprehensive models of Hobbes and Trevor-Roper, or the elegant cultural comprehensiveness of Rabb, the reader is faced with a very long string of individual rebellions and revolutions. Zagorin presents them clearly and judiciously, with some well-chosen contemporary quotations and with due regard for the political theories of the revolutionaries. There are no surprises. Zagorin is admirably up-to-date in his reading, or was when he handed his typescript to the publishers. His judgments are always sensible, his criticisms of opinions other than his own are invariably well reasoned and courteous. His most controversial views are in his account of the English civil war, where he reproduces his earlier ideas of the polarity of court and country and where, predictably, he rejects the new revisionism which downgrades the effectiveness of the pre-1640 parliamentarians.

Zagorin does not write a general conclusion and, in the end, I was left somewhat at a loss as to whether he had any except negative conclusions. But this is perhaps unfair. There are many partial conclusions and generalizations dispersed within the text. Perhaps, too, this book is precisely what is needed at this moment: an effective piece of demolition of too-jurist theories, together with a workmanlike presentation of the evidence and of at least preliminary limited conclusions based on a genuinely comparative study of early modern European history.

Constituent elements

Frank O'Gorman

JOHN A. PHILLIPS

Electoral Behavior in Unreformed England: Plumpers, Splitters and Straights

353pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press. £28.45. 0 691 05365 0

Probably no subject in modern British history has been as badly neglected and as seriously misunderstood as the electorate in the century before Reform. Swallowing whole the grotesque distortions of the radical propagandists of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, historians have proceeded to parrot the customary catalogue of absurdities: that the electorate was corrupt, that it was unrepresentative, that it was narrow and exclusive, that it was politically uneducated and that it was humbly deferential.

Seven years ago John Phillips completed a remarkable PhD dissertation at the University of Iowa in which he traced the electoral behaviour of some 15,000 electors in four constituencies at elections between 1761 and 1802. With sophistication and ingenuity, he devised a number of computer-assisted tests upon these data. During the past few years, Professor Phillips has published two articles derived from this material. At last, and with a few revisions for publication, the dissertation itself is now made available for the wider readership which it has always deserved.

What Phillips has to say about the electorate is of the first importance for studies of the Hanoverian political order and his book immediately becomes essential reading both for scholars and for students. Cutting through the generations of enervated

myth and prejudice, he demonstrates convincingly that the electorate was dominated by small, independent craftsmen who were fast coming to political maturity. Over one half of the electorate were men of this type, a further 15-20 per cent were retailers. And if one-tenth of the electorate came from the gentle and professional classes, a further tenth can be classed as labourers. In some places, at least, the electorate was a rough but fairly ready reflection of larger occupational and social structures. A complex and independently minded electorate like this was not easy to mobilize. Certainly, economic and social determinants seem to have provided little inspiration for electoral behaviour: religious and political considerations counted for everything.

Phillips shows beyond dispute that over the period covered by his book there was a steady increase in party voting among the electorate. Given recent revisions in the party history of the eighteenth century this is possibly no surprise. For Phillips, however, the parties are the decisive agencies for politicizing the electorate. Turn-outs were high and rising and elections were increasingly being contested on ideological lines.

In spite of the ubiquity of "patronage", therefore, the electoral system had plenty of life in it. It may have lacked some of the more formal mechanisms of representative democracy which appeared later in the nineteenth century but this very informality was in its own way invigorating. As Phillips recognizes, the distinction between nomination to a seat - where the electoral process was only a formality - and influence where an attempt was made to exert pressure upon electors - was quite fundamental. The latter was universal, the former quite rare. As he points out, the number of constituencies where both seats were consistently under nomination was small. He notices - but does not pursue - the possibility of an

aborted contest. The number of these was, in fact, quite large. At the general elections of 1806 and 1807, for example, the number of formal contests, eighty-six and one hundred respectively, needs to be supplemented by the number of aborted or abandoned contests, sixty-six and fifty-three respectively. Considerations such as these dramatically modify the type of conclusions which historians sometimes draw from the number of formal contests baldly stated.

Phillips's book goes part of the way, then, towards rehabilitating the unreformed electorate. Although it may seem churlish to cavil, the reader must wonder just how typical and representative his four constituencies

really are. Although the methodological reasons for their choice seem plausible, the fact remains that two large free-man boroughs in east and south-east England (Norwich and Maidstone), one large householders' borough in the east Midlands (Northampton) and one small scot-and-lot borough in Sussex (Lewes) omits a very considerable portion of the electoral nation. Just as damaging, the terminal date of 1802 dilutes the significance of any generalizations made about the "unreformed" electorate. Whether the trends and developments so ingeniously identified by Phillips continue after 1802 cannot just be assumed.

There is, moreover, something of an

The opposition's organ

W. A. Speck

SIMON VAREY (Editor)

Lord Bollingbroke: Contributions to the "Craftsman"

223pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £27.50. 0 19 822386 2

The first *Craftsman* appeared on December 5, 1726, and for the next ten years Henry St John, Viscount Bollingbroke, was a regular contributor to its campaign against Sir Robert Walpole's ministry. Fifty-one of the essays which he contributed have long been accepted in the canon of his works. Now Simon Varey has added a further forty-nine.

The basis of his attributions is, however, debatable. Dr Varey argues that the capital letters A, C, D, N, O, and R, which were appended to the essays in the collected editions of 1731 and

1737, identified individual authors, and that the letter O was Bollingbroke's signature. This method of identification has been dismissed by one recent authority as a meaningless game, while even Varey accepts two essays initialled C and D as Bollingbroke's, suggesting the possibility that they were misprints for O. The problem is that there is not much more to go on. Varey rightly eschews the dubious approach of establishing authorship by stylistic similarities, agreeing with Pope that "there is nothing so foolish than to pretend to be sure of knowing a great writer by his style". Yet external documentary evidence is extremely sparse. Occasionally contemporaries claimed to have inside knowledge of who wrote particular essays. A French translation of a *Craftsman* *Extraordinary* of June 30, 1734, is published here in an appendix, for although no original exists the translator attributed it to Bollingbroke. Combining through the dispatches of foreign envoys, many of whom were in touch with the opposition, might yield similar attributions. For example, Reichenebach, a Prussian resident in London, wrote to Berlin on April 14, 1730, sending a *Craftsman* *Extraordinary* which he claimed that Bollingbroke and Pulteney had written (Hull University Library, Hotham MSS).

A further problem is that the contributors to the *Craftsman* were not writing independently but formed an editorial team. They wrote joint articles, as Reichenebach observed and as the occasional use of double capitals in the collected editions apparently acknowledged. They also addressed themselves to the task of maintaining some consistency in the persona of the journal, and in the polemical stance which he adopted. This makes the isolation of individual essays not only a difficult but to some extent an artificial task. Those published in this edition, for example, forty-nine out of a total of 511 numbers which appeared between 1726 and 1736, seem to jump haphazardly from topic to topic, when in sequence they contributed to the development of a debate. A constant theme in the periodical, for instance, was the drawing of parallels between Walpole and previous allegedly corrupt favourites. The *Craftsman* never wearied of scouring the past for such examples, from Sejanus to the Duke of Buckingham. Numbers 137 and 139, for February 15 and March 1, 1729, related the history of the reigns of Elizabeth and James I, extolling the Queen and castigating the King. The parallel with the eighteenth century was driven home by referring to Salisbury, James I's Lord Treasurer, as "King Robin". Bollingbroke, if he was indeed the author of the essay in number 142, defended the *Craftsman*'s employment of these precedents for the Robbocracy against ministerial objections to them.

Assuming that Varey has correctly identified Bollingbroke's contribution, it would have been worth while to have placed them in their overall context, and to have assessed how distinctive they were. In particular, it might have been possible to gauge how far Bollingbroke attempted to adapt Tory attitudes to the new situation faced by the opposition in these years. The *Craftsman*'s basic position was essentially that of a Country Whig. As

explanatory vacuum which makes Phillips's notably concerned to state the party aspects of electoral behaviour. No doubt he is quite right to do so but it never becomes clear how or why the traditional, local constituency systems in the centrally directed party structure of the later eighteenth century. The still requires detailed exegesis before the rise of party in the constitution can be thoroughly understood. In spite of the battery of statistics masterfully deployed in this book, therefore, some central elements in electoral behaviour remain unclear.

the dedication to the first collected edition proclaimed, "We have always passed under the denomination of Whigs, and argued upon the principles which that party hath formerly professed, while they were not strenuously asserted by many others, who have been reputed Tories." The opposition was upholding a traditional Whig philosophy, Walpole no longer supported. The most obvious way in which the *Craftsman* tried to substantiate its claim was in its unwearied assertion that the ministry was bent on increasing the power of the executive by means of corruption, while the opposition strove to restrict it to its proper sphere in the Constitution. In its early days, however, it also insisted that Walpole had reversed the foreign policy pursued by the Whigs from the Revolution to the death of Stanhope. Where his Whig predecessor had sought to ally with the Emperor to offset the threat which France posed to the balance of power, Walpole had allied with France against the Emperor. The *Craftsman*'s initial campaign was to criticize this reversal as being detrimental to British interests. Cabel D'Anvers, the fictitious editor who personified its politics, was so called to identify the journal with the imperial cause.

Despite the claim that many Tories now shared former Whig views, those who had opposed the Grand Alliance in the War of the Spanish Succession, and welcomed the Treaty of Utrecht which ended it, must have had difficulties in adjusting to the opposition stance. Judging by essays in this edition, Bollingbroke was one such. The panegyric on the Duke of Marlborough, hero of the Grand Alliance, in number 252 came only from the man who had been the Captain-General's arch-enemy in the last four years of Queen Anne's reign. His contributions on foreign policy have little to say about the advantages of an alliance with the Empire, and dwell much more on the importance of protecting Britain's colonies and commerce, concerns which Tories genuinely had in common with Country Whigs.

Dr Varey is clearly more concerned with the literary than with the historical significance of the *Craftsman*. His few footnotes shed little light on many of the specific incidents mentioned in the essays which even specialists in the period will find unfamiliar. On the other hand, establishing the text of the originals, and noting variants between them and the collected editions, is clearly been a labour of love. While they should be "thankful for the appearance of the first edition of at least some of the *Craftsman*'s essays since the eighteenth century."

Thomas Spence, the Radical and land reformer, is commemorated in two recently published selections of his writings. *Pigs' Meat: Selected Writings of Thomas Spence* (1980) Nottingham: Spokenword. £35. (ISBN 315 0) appears with an introductory essay and notes by G. I. Gallop. *The Political Works of Thomas Spence* has been edited by H. T. Dickinson (154pp, Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Arrow, 1982). £12.95. (ISBN 0 85036 021 2) 24.15, paperback. 0 85036 021 2

Metropolitan militants

F. M. L. Thompson

DAVID GOODWAY

London Chartism 1838-1848

333pp. Cambridge University Press. £22.50. 0 521 23867 6

Chartism has always been a rich source of democratic and working class mythology, and one of its most persistent legends is that a great popular movement was denied its chance of success by the weakness and apathy of a London which failed to turn out in determined support of the cause. In *London Chartism 1838-1848* David Goodway sets about this legend with a will, and succeeds in reducing it to water: or rather, as he himself would put it, he completes the revisionist process started over ten years ago by lowerth Prothero, who showed the strongly Chartist line taken by many of the most important trade societies in London in the 1840s.

Goodway's method is to build up a detailed and complete narrative of Chartist activities and to allow this record to speak for itself in establishing London's credentials as a major Chartist centre in the 1840s, even though its people had been unmistakably lukewarm or indifferent in 1839-9. Piecing together this record and chronology of Chartist localities, the basic local associations usually inspired by a dominant trade and sustained by a local pub, of Chartist meetings and speakers, and Chartist demonstrations, has been a difficult and laborious task. It makes for a fairly laborious read, too. The dense thicker of references - 475 of them for under eighty pages of text at this point - and the instant attention to every detail are rather too close to the book's origins in a thesis for comfort, and only Chartist buffs eager to catch the name of each fleeting speaker and celebrate the memory of every pub where Chartists once gathered are likely to appreciate the full density of the

account. The message, however, is well taken. In 1838-9, at the time of the first national Convention in London and of the first petition, meetings were thinly attended, Londoners would not turn out on the streets, and London workers showed no spirit or enthusiasm to match the provincial masses. In 1842 and 1848, by contrast, London workers redeemed their Chartist characters by impressive displays of militancy and unity, and indeed in 1848 metropolitan Chartism was at its most dangerous and insurrectionary at a moment when the provinces were rather subdued.

Neither of London's moods, in the event, did the Chartist cause any good. The most absorbing section of the book is devoted to investigating the maintenance of order, and concludes that the preservation of the peace and the containment of Chartism was chiefly due to the effectiveness of the Metropolitan Police. On the strength of his extensive original work on the police records and those of the Treasury Solicitor, which give vivid details of the prosecution cases against those charged with riotous behaviour, Goodway presents a graphic account of a succession of assemblies, some peaceable, some disorderly and violent, and of police methods of crowd control and dispersal. It is no longer particularly arresting to find that the police were regarded as class enemies by the populace, since their vigorous suppression of popular high-spirited games and diversions in the name of preventing public nuisance had already stamped them as the servants of property and middle-class morality, quite aside from their role in protecting established authority from popular protest. Nevertheless it is a salutary shock to find what a modern ring many of the features of the 1840s have: the accusations of police brutality; the stories of rough handling of innocent bystanders; and the crowds pelting the police with missiles picked up from road materials or torn from the hoardings round the half-finished Nelson's Column. The post-Chartist century too easily induced the illusion

that a benign image of the friendly policeman was universally accepted until very recently.

Tough and unfriendly policemen are seen in action, breaking heads with their truncheons or riding down the crowds with their horses. In August 1842 they prevented an ugly situation getting out of hand when angry demonstrators were trying to stop troops getting to Euston to entrain for the provinces. In the great days of 1848, with troops concentrated in London and ready to defend major public buildings, it was the police who kept the peace on April 10, the day of the great Chartist meeting in Kennington Common, and in the aftermath it was the police who dealt with the lesser-known, but serious, riots of June 12, and with a number of smaller skirmishes plus some deadly earnest, if futile, insurrectionary conspiracies. The tense and highly-charged atmosphere of Bonner's Fields, Clerkenwell Green, Trafalgar Square, and Kennington Common is dramatically evoked, and almost convinces us that a Chartist triumph was frustrated by effective police action.

At this point, however, doubts arise. Was it revolution, or at least a complete breakdown of order, that was averted, or simply more broken windows in clubland? And whatever it was that was frustrated, was it by the external agency of the police, or did it spring from within Chartist ranks, or from the character and economy of London?

To be sure, Goodway does address himself to these larger issues, but it has to be said that while he is long on stirring description he is somewhat short on analysis. It is one thing to contend that the events of April 10 were wrongly dismissed as a fiasco in all the textbooks. There was a massive demonstration of support for the Charter at the Kennington meeting, and it is probably right that the turnout numbered something like 150,000, and certain that pro-government sources were being deliberately misleading in

order to belittle the movement when they claimed that only 10,000 or 20,000 were present. It is equally true that the government and the propertied classes took the meeting and the proposed procession to Westminster extremely seriously; they were thoroughly scared, and made elaborate military preparations. It is quite another thing to imply that when the leaders called off the march and sent the crowd home it was a purely tactical decision not to risk a confrontation when there was a strong likelihood of physical defeat. It is just as plausible to argue that when the leaders backed down before a show of force this proved that their bluff had been called, and that neither they nor their supporters, however much they might have breathed fire, had ever had the determination to make the cause in a fighting matter. This was not surprising, since Chartism was caught awkwardly between the tradition of eighteenth-century riots which sought to intimidate authority into better behaviour, and the organized trade union and labour movements of the nineteenth century which sought to change the structure of authority through the weight of disciplined pressure.

In any case it is somewhat inconsistent to suggest that if London had produced a powerful Chartist response in 1839 the cause might have triumphed; if the police and army could contain London Chartism in 1848 they could presumably have done much the same in 1839 if called on. The apathy of London in 1839, and the ferment in 1842 and 1848 are explained in straightforward cyclical terms: it is argued that the depression of 1837-9 was scarcely felt in London, although it was severe in the northern manufacturing districts, while in the depression of 1841-2 London had its full share of unemployment and hardship, and in the crisis of 1847-8 suffered intensely. That may well have

been so, but unfortunately little evidence is offered in support of this view and no explanation of such marked differences in the impact of depressions. The long section in the book examining conditions in the different trades is signalled as an economic history of London in the Chartist decade. It will be invaluable to labour historians, with its separate subsections on twenty-one different trades detailing the fortunes of their trade societies and establishing the differences in working practices, conditions, and wages in the honourable and dishonourable sectors of each trade. But it does not attempt to give an account of the metropolitan economy as a whole and fluctuations in its general activity. The message of this part of the book, indeed, is that what politicized the members and impelled them to take to the streets was the growing disintegration of the trade societies' hold over the labour market, working conditions, and wages. Outwork, sweating, employment of cheap, unapprenticed and female labour, sloop-dealers, and shoddy workmanship were spreading in shoemaking, tailoring, hating, cabinet-making, the building trades, in almost every skilled trade one cares to mention. The honourable society men were undercut, their wages were forced down, and they were deprived of work; no wonder they were aggrieved, restive, and militant. This, however, would seem to be a medium to long-term trend, not something which was present in 1842 but absent in 1839.

Clearly, more work needs to be done to establish the relationships between these deep-seated disturbances in the traditional structure of London's superior trades and the short term oscillations of boom and slump. Dr Goodway has put London firmly on the Chartist map but he has not yet drawn in all its features.

The Old Corps's creed

Linda Colley

REED BROWNING

Political and Constitutional Ideas of the Court Whigs

281pp. Louisiana State University Press. £20.60. 0 8071 0980 0

Dispel once remarked that state Whiggism in the mid-eighteenth century stank "in the nostrils of the nation". Professional historians have been more bland of phrase but no less dismissive. Whereas opposition ideology as expounded by Bollingbroke and his allies has received detailed, sometimes deferential analysis from H. T. Dickinson, Bertrand Goldgar and Isaac Kramnick, it is often implied that the Walpolian and Pelhamite administrations were sustained by patronage and graft and had no need of dogma. "I am no saint, no spartan, no reformer", claimed Walpole, delighting as always to shock his more timid supporters as well as his priggish opponents. But Reed Browning is not to be shocked. In this well-researched and interesting study, he boldly sets out to redeem and affirm the Old Corps's moral fibre.

He argues first that the Patriot opposition of the 1720s and 1730s was characterized by a "Catonian perspective". Cato the Censor, Cato of Utica and the essays of John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon, *Cato's Letters*, all represented the sort of stark, uncompromising concern for liberty which the dissidents wished to appropriate for themselves. The Court Whigs, retaliated by espousing a rival classical hero who had published as well as perished. Marcus Tullius Cicero was sufficiently identified with liberty to soothe Whig scruples, but had tempered his libertarianism with enough flexibility, pragmatism, and moderation to serve as an ideal anti-utopianist for Walpolian and Pelhamite Realpolitik.

Having identified Ciceronian references in government propaganda and iconography - Natter engraved a medal with the Roman on one side and Sir Robert on the other - Professor Browning examines the constitutional ideas of five "representative" Court Whigs. They are something of a mixed bunch. We are given the worthy (Lord Hardwicke and Thomas Herring), the waspish (Benjamin Hoadly), the witty (Lord Hervey), and the merely witty (Samuel Squire). Diverse as they may be in office, temperament and intellect, Browning is convinced that they shared not only partisanship but also a utilitarian, even "crude but consistent theory of the constitution."

I am less sure. Certainly Browning is right to stress that Court Whigs held to a muted but distinctive bias of royalism. In contrast with oppositionists like the Pulteney brothers, who flirted with resistance and quasi-republicanism, Old Corps men were careful to commemorate the Restoration of 1660 as much as the Revolution of 1688. Certainly, too, all of Browning's sample Whigs evince a hotly abhorrent aversion to plebeian initiative: this is only to be expected, given that ministerial politicians could usually dispense with extra-parliamentary popularity. I doubt, however, whether the utilitarianism which Browning sees as central to Court Whiggery represented much more than the standard outlook and apology of all jaded office-holders and civil servants: that whatever government is best administered is best. Sometimes, indeed, the more ideologically void. As all men seek to rob the state, Archbishop Herring is quoted as reasoning, "I think one may as well keep to the gang in which we were first listed."

Browning is of course right to remind us that many MPs, polemicists and bishops between 1720 and 1760 were pro-administration out of conviction as well as self-interest. But for two reasons Court Whiggery as

described in this book is bound to appear a rather ill-defined creed. First, not enough attention is given to the content of parliamentary debates as distinct from the arguments of pamphlets, sermons and journalists. Second and more seriously, although Browning argues (rightly in my view) that Whig and Tory loyalties remained potent up to the mid-eighteenth century, and although the main cause of this binary survival was the longevity of religious controversy, little attention is given to the religious content of Old Corps political attitudes. Thus, in his mentions but does not examine the Hoadly's controversy. Yet surely Hoadly's views on the relationship between Church and State which fuelled the controversy were also what made him a Court Whig? Moreover, it is inappropriate for Browning to take J. P. Kenyon to task for exaggerating Walpolian Whiggery's moral breakdown, while side-stepping the weightiest evidence for the prosecution case - the Whig administrations' complacent neglect of Protestant dissent after 1719. Their persistent refusal to moderate the Test Act could usefully have been discussed, as could Browning's own verdict on Herring: "His public life was one long struggle against Rome and dissent" - pragmatic to be sure, but Whiggish?

Finally, I would quarrel with Browning's monolithic, Catonian and distinct from Bollingbroke's Tories (as called themselves patriots) seldom, P. nor did they venerate any of the Catos - the classical variety was too republican. Trenchard and Gordon were too latitudinarian. Browning's neat and illuminating distinction between Catonians and Ciceronians describes not so much the divide between opposition and government, but rather the tensions within the Whig strand after 1725 - its dissidents enforced political exile and its ministerial majority comfortably compromised.

Extra-parliamentary activities

I. J. Prothero

EDWARD ROYLE AND JAMES WALVIN

English Radicals and Reformers 1760-1848

233pp. Brighton: Harvester. £18.95. 0 7108 0382 6

This is a narrative account of the various groups of reformers who pressed for extensive changes in the political system to make it a more representative and even democratic one. It deals with the early beginnings of radicalism, associated with Wilkes, Wyll and the conflicts with the American colonists, the more plebeian societies of the 1790s, and the much more extensive campaigns of the first half of the nineteenth century, culminating in the Chartist movement that met its final defeat in 1848.

There were two basic elements in the growth of radicalism. One was the development of techniques of mobilizing "public opinion", resting on an extensive and independent newspaper press that reported Parliamentary proceedings and on the "platform" - series of public meetings which were fully reported in the press and brought pressure to bear on Parliament, largely through the device of petitions. This amounted to a dramatic expansion of the political nation of far more significance than the numbers who actually had the vote, and England became very peculiar in that extra-parliamentary campaigns were a normal and intrinsic part of political life. The other element was the conviction that small groups of people led the state in a self-interested way, and because they controlled Parliament by corruption, imposed taxation on the rest of the nation to finance this parasitism. The remedy was to secure the independence of the

House of Commons by such means as the exclusion of placemen, extension of the electorate to prevent bribery, and having more frequent elections to keep MPs accountable to their constituents. Radicals saw the House of Commons as being there not to help the government do things, but to raise grievances and stop it from doing things. Radicalism thus had a strong negative element, seeking to remove corrupt, tyrannical and expensive institutions, cut government down to size, and so reduce its cost.

English Radicals and Reformers is certainly the most convenient recent chronicle of these events. James Walvin is a specialist on the Anti-Slavery movement and the radical societies of the 1790s, Edward Royle on anti-Christian movements and Owenism. These topics receive emphasis in the book, but not unduly, and it is on the whole only these sections that draw on much research material. Most of the book is based on a wide reading of secondary works. Its value is as a very serviceable and succinct survey of recent historical scholarship, commented on and used in a common-sense way from the vantage-point of broad familiarity with the politics of the period.

It is difficult in a volume of this size to do justice to the complexity and variety of radicalism, and several sections and discussions are rather brief. But two important dimensions in particular should have been looked at more fully. One is that the radical tradition was partly a tradition of action, with a number of established strategies and tactics, running from pledges for Parliamentary candidates to a general strike. Particularly important at certain times were the convictions that the authorities were violent, planning an unconstitutional reign of terror, and that the "People" had constitutional rights to bear arms and resist "tyranny". Given such conditions, when public meetings were often thought to be in danger from a "Petition-type attack" which should

be resisted, the authors seem mistaken in seeing a stress on "constitutionalism" as a commitment to peaceful actions alone.

Secondly, there should have been more discussion of the social and economic bases of radicalism. The authors clearly rejected a reductionist or class explanation of radicalism, and the continuity of radical ideas and their appeal to different social groups, support this view. But radical demands are likely to have seemed to have some relevance to social and economic concerns. It is striking that in England in the first half of the nineteenth century political remedies were so often sought for social and economic grievances. Why was it that the State was so often seen as the enemy, as tyrannical, parasitic and predatory? The book would have benefited from addressing itself to this problem, and linking it with developments in the towns, the threats to communities, and the opportunities and encouragement which the political structure gave to attempts at change.

Culture, Ideology and Politics (368pp, Routledge and Kegan Paul, £6.95, 0 7100 9433 7), a new title in Routledge's History Workshop Series and edited by Raphael Samuel and Gareth Stedman Jones, contains some seventeen essays which "originated as an international tribute to the work of Eric Hobsbawm". The book explores some of the oldest questions in Marxist historiography such as "base" and "superstructure", art and social life and also newer ones such as the relationship of dreams and fantasy to political action. Subjects include Michel Vovelle on "Ideologies and ideal mentalities", Victor Klemm on "Tennyson, King Arthur and 'England'", Christopher Hill on "The English Revolution and the 'People'", Jacques Ruplik on "The 'People' and the 'People's Party'", and Raphael Samuel and Gareth Stedman Jones on "The Labour Party and social democracy".

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Sayers of the last word

A. W. B. Simpson

ALAN PATERSON
The Law Lords
288pp, Macmillan. £12.
0 333 23886 9

A massive corpus of literature has developed around the workings of the American Supreme Court and the justices who have constituted that remarkable institution. Some of it is highly technical, but some in contrast is popular or even sensational, for the Brethren decide issues of great political and social importance, operating within a system of broadly defined constitutional rights. Our final court of appeal in this country is the House of Lords, but neither that court itself nor the individuals who have sat in it have generated the interest which centres on their American counterparts. Nor is this surprising for, as a judicial body, the House of Lords under the British constitution does not occupy anything like so important a position in the scheme of government. It is concerned merely with the fine tuning of a legal system which is no longer an independent force in the state, but merely an instrument of bureaucratic departmental power.

Fine tuning is what barristers are engaged in when handling contested litigation and so, from their viewpoint, the tapers are the people who matter. To the public generally they do not matter, only very occasionally as in the recent dispute over the subsidizing of fares on London Transport does a legal decision of the Lords attract widespread attention. When this does happen, the public imagines the Law Lords to be taking some important stance on the economics of transport in London, a view which the Law Lords correctly deny - their job is simply to split legal hairs. Were the judicial powers of the Lords to be abolished tomorrow, as they nearly were in the 1870s, no major constitutional or social change would have occurred; the Court of Appeal would enjoy a slightly enhanced status in those circles in which its status matters.

But even if the Law Lords do not resemble at all closely in function the justices of the Supreme Court, they do, in a handful of cases annually, enjoy the last word, and to litigants and their advisers the last word is important. Alan Paterson's study, concerned principally with the period 1957-73, is the latest addition to the modest list of books analysing their achievements. A literature which includes L. Blom Cooper and G. Drewry's *Final Appeal* (1972), R. Stevens's *Law and Politics: The House of Lords as a Judicial Body 1800-1976* (1979), R. F. V. Heuston's *Lives of the Lord Chancellors 1885-1940* (1964) and less scholarly, more polemical terms such as J. A. G. Griffith's *The Politics of the Judiciary* (1977). The theoretical basis of the study is sociological, and is fairly accurately encapsulated in the blurb on the dust-jacket, as 'How Britain's Top Judges See Their Role'. The analysis, however, ranges somewhat more widely than this would indicate, discussing among other matters the interaction between bench and bar, the practices followed in reaching agreement or disagreement and in preparing opinions, and the methodological problems of role analysis as illustrated by the research undertaken. As well as consulting the more obvious documentary sources of information, Mr Paterson has made extensive use of interviews, with both docile and co-operative Law Lords (though some, less docile, declined to be interviewed) and with barristers engaged in appellate work. Neither solicitors nor (perish the thought) litigants feature at all, in tacit awareness of the fact that in the world of legal last rites they hardly matter.

What emerges from this is both an interesting account of how the system works - or at least is thought to work by the high priests themselves and their acolytes - and a curious picture of what individual Law Lords suppose to be their function. To have persuaded so many senior lawyers to have co-operated in such an investigation is in itself an achievement; were he to turn to diplomacy Paterson would surely have a bright future.

Books need a hero and a theme, and the character of his evidence presented

Paterson with problems in his search for them. As hero he settled, understandably enough, on Lord Reid of Drem, a Law Lord for some twenty-six years (1948-74), who became a major figure in the eyes of the bar but remained virtually unknown to the public at large (the occasional publicist apart, judges only become well known when they put their foot in things, eg by putting rapists on probation or by presiding over committees or commissions of enquiry). The theme is Lord Reid's achievement in articulating and selling to his colleagues, with at least some success, a coherent, thought-out view of the proper limits of judicial law-making. Of central importance here is the interpretation placed upon the so-called Practice Statement of 1966. Back in 1898 (or perhaps 1861) the Lords announced that they were legally infallible, in the sense that they were bound to follow their own previous decisions. In 1966 they announced that they were not infallible and being unable to think of any intellectually satisfactory justification for this constitutional voice-face, they had recourse to the language of

double-think, and called it a matter of "practice" (like wearing wigs or starting at 10 am). This event, though exciting to the bar, did not I think make the nine o'clock news, and since this recantation the Law Lords have had some trouble in deciding when they can change their minds and when it would be inappropriate to do so; and Lord Reid had some influence on producing an uneasy consensus.

Lurking behind Paterson's discussion is the idea that the Law Lords, occupying the elevated position they do, ought to possess some clear vision of their place in the scheme of government, and some idea, in particular branches of the law, of where they are going. But what seems to emerge from this study is a picture of confusion, not of pattern. Even in the one branch of the law still dominated by judicial opinion - criminal law - the achievement of the Law Lords has been deeply unimpressive. The fault, if there is one, may lie in the intense individualism of the English barrister, which, carried through to the bench (especially one of fluctuating composition), tends to produce a court of undisciplined prima donnas, unable

to co-operate and compromise, or in a collegiate spirit. Paterson's description of the processes by which decisions are taken and opinions written brings out this characteristic of the Law Lords peculiarly clearly; they change the habits acquired through a lifetime of court-centred legal practice. Paterson also documents another weakness built into the system - the tendency to intellectual isolation. The senior appellate judges of America are protected from this by the institution of the law clerk, which, at its best, continually brings the wise old ones into contact with the bright young ones, fresh from the law schools, new to their mutual benefit.

But, in the absence of any clear commitment to a theory of rights (and the word does not even appear in the index), it is hard to see how the Law Lords could assert themselves further, and pessimism might view Mr Paterson's fascinating study as an account of a body staffed by individuals of great intellectual ability whose great intellectual relationship to their very modest role in British Government.

At the side of the accused

Nell MacCormick

DAVID NAPLEY
Not Without Prejudice
445pp. Harp. £13.95.
0 245 53799 6

Had Sir David Napley, like the redoubtable Mr Herriot, received his professional training in Glasgow rather than London, he would perhaps have called his book of memoirs "All Punters Great and Small" (and would unquestionably have realized that England is neither a country within whose limits one can walk from Land's End to John O' Groats, nor one of which Clement Attlee was Prime Minister). Certainly the punters whose gambles with the justice game had the benefit of Sir David's guidance have ranged from the great and famous, Sir Thomas Bessam and Mr Jeremy Thorpe, to the humble and obscure, Mr Michael Lavaglio or the three young men on whom offensive weapons were planted by the police, their names being cleared and pardons granted only years later after the Mars-Jones inquiry.

The man who emerges from this book (memoirs cannot but reveal more of the rememberer than of the events and personalities remembered) is one whose skills as attorney at law anyone accused of crime or tangled up in civil litigation would be more than lucky to secure. In a world in which, all too often, accused persons on run-of-the-mill charges get little more from their lawyers than run-of-the-mill advice, advocacy and pleading in mitigation, Sir David stands out as a shining exception by his preaching as stated and his practice as revealed here. His meticulous and hard-headed preparation of cases, his insistence on checking his client's story where possible, his readiness to suspect the scene of an alleged crime in person, his legitimate exploitation of committal proceedings, his taking seriously the proposition that "instructions" rather than a wodge of papers are what he gives to counsel - all this, and more besides, indicate the dedication with which he has served both his clients and the cause of seeing justice done according to law. Not that he is unwilling to admit to having made mistakes - indeed, in the course of defending himself against the criticisms of *Private Eye* and *Autumn Waugh* for his method of conducting the Thorpe defence, he rather charmingly draws attention to certain mistakes he does think he made while spiritedly rejecting the actual accusations heaped upon him. In the same connection, more importantly, he adds a persuasive defence of his client before the bar of an unfair public opinion to the effective defence he and counsel conducted against the indictments at law.

Whether the paragon of the solicitor's craft who appears from these pages is identically the same person as the author, whether the meticulous

standards of lawyering which here emerge have been evident for every one of his clients, are matters upon which it would be impertinent to speculate in ignorance. One may suspect that there is a real identity, for what seems obvious beyond any question is that Sir David is a man with a powerful sense of individual justice. When that sense is aroused by the affairs or misfortunes of a particular client, no stone seems likely to be left unturned in pursuit of the just result as it appears to him.

It may then be something of a paradox that at the level of the most general issues of justice the author reveals what might almost be called a complacent and unreflective Toryism. This is not to say, of course, that being a Tory is incompatible with having a general and reflectively established conception of justice. Yet the man who so convincingly demolishes the intolerable conclusions of and the intolerable practices revealed by the Steve Biko inquiry; the man who with the help of Eric Fletcher, MP, unmasked the police malpractices revealed by the Mars-Jones inquiry; this man seems too easily to assume that the wrongs he had tried to right are more in the way of isolated blemishes in a world on the whole reasonably ordered than particular evidences of more general disorders abroad.

Or is this comment itself unfair? Sir David, as his book reveals, has by no means been a slacker in pressing for reforms in criminal law and procedure. Of all the things he advocates in the book, none is more firmly pressed than the case for creating some more effective final forum than presently exists for correcting the particular cases of injustices through wrongful conviction which the present English and indeed any humanly contrived system of criminal adjudication will unavoidably throw up, however infrequently. His strictures on, for example, the injustices to individuals capable of arising from Department of Trade inspectors' reports on the affairs of companies and the conduct of their directors are as trenchant as one can imagine anyone putting. And the evidence he offers is strong.

On reflection, therefore, the comment is unfair. The author has his own grounds, by no means negligible, for his commitment to the general lines of the existing system for doing justice within that, he has a sharp eye for injustice, and no hesitancy in making his point. The point is perhaps the more telling for the generally establishmentarian views of his maker. Nor can anyone with a belief in the virtues of a system which rightly allows accused of even the most abominable crimes to fall to rejoice in the sharp but measured response here offered to Sir Robert Mark's late defamations of the legal profession.

That it is the solicitor's branch of the profession which provides the meat of the Napley Memoirs is indeed, as he observes, a distinctive feature of the

book, if a little less so to Scots than English eyes. The public conception of the life of the law has been more based on tales of bench and bar than on solicitors' work, and is to that extent thoroughly distorted one. Sir David's intensely readable though not always stylistically polished account of civil and (more noticeably) criminal cases from the perspective of the lawyer who deals directly with the lay client does him or her through the legal mind from start to finish should be welcome as helping to correct a profoundly imbalanced public perception of what lawyers in the main do. Even if there is sometimes a certain flavour of nose-dropping, and even if Sir David's kindling as a human being leaves one gasping for a hard word about some among the luminaries of the law, the virtue of the solicitor's readiness wholly to involve himself in his client's business shines through the whole text. If we still await plain tales from the conveyancer's chambers, we perhaps do so with breath somewhat abated than heretofore.

This review began by making comparison with the "Yet" books of James Herriot. The comparison is apt, for Sir David is intended as uncomplimentary. When somebody tells well the tale of a life's work, a profession which engages him, a practitioner with the fortunes of others (or their pets and livestock) the result is not likely to be a compelling reading matter. Not only but not least for this quality. Sir David Napley's *Not Without Prejudice* is a welcome and highly readable addition to the literature of the law.

NORMAN HARTLEY
Shadowplay
275pp. Collins. £7.95.
0 00 22639 6

John Railton, President of the World News Agency, is fighting to preserve the integrity of the agency, threatened by the obese and villainous Paul Sallenger, and simultaneously defending himself against the charge of being a Soviet agent who has sold the secrets of the latest Western missile system. Fluent and exciting, but only relative credibility if read at ultra high speed.

MICHAEL BAGLEY
The Phantom Factor
236pp. Allison and Busby. £7.95.
0 85031 485 2

Gang of ex-servicemen hijack a cargo of plutonium in order to build a bomb of their own and hold the country to ransom. The plot is not a new one, but the author's deep seriousness - he withholds some details of the bomb-making process as being too dangerous for print - rejuvenates it and redeems some crudeness in the narration.

T. J. Blythe

Posers and painters

Robert Hewison

FRANCES BORZELLO
The Artist's Model
178pp. Junction Books. £13.50
(paperback, £6.50).
0 8245 068 3

LIAM HUDSON
Bodies of Knowledge:
The Psychological Significance of the
Nude in Art
162pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
£12.95.
0 297 78117 0

Frances Borzello has written her history, *The Artist's Model*, in order to explore the stereotype of male creator and female subject, and to explode the myth that the relationship between them is governed by a heady mixture of artistic inspiration and sex. This she does by assembling the relatively limited number of facts that can be gathered about the profession of modelling. The job itself has changed little since the newly founded Royal Academy hired four male models in 1768, and it is likely that studio practice has changed little in the preceding centuries. Borzello describes the mundane realities of modelling, pointing out that it has been as much a male as a female occupation, and that in the heyday of modelling, "character" models were as much in demand as those with beautiful bodies.

The account is a useful, though rather small, service to art history; even while challenging the cultural and sexual myths that surround the artist-model relationship, Borzello shows that they are more interesting than the reality. She demonstrates how they have evolved through the evidence of literary accounts, specific paintings of the artist and model, and general witness to cultural change such as the cartoons in *Punch*. She appears to have made a thorough trawl of potential

sources of information, but relies on a narrow range of references. Her conclusion is that the relationship between artist and model has almost always been one of exploitation.

While the casts [of sculpture] helped keep models in their place in the eighteenth century, the artists' patronizing attitude towards their models' stupidity, amusing antics and social aspirations achieved this aim in the nineteenth. On top of this, female models had an extra slur on their status with which to contend, one which was all their own: their alleged connection with sexual immorality.

The discovery of the imaginary land of Bohemia in the latter part of the nineteenth century led to a change of position, at least for the females. "Bohemia" turned models into women, but the change in sexual status was only from that of prostitute to mistress, and this is still the abiding image of the relationship. Some artists, however, have made enterprising iconographic use of the model. Just as Bohemia was being mapped out, Courbet, and then Manet, broke the voyeuristic convention of artist-looking-at-model by moving her to the artist's side of the easel (as in Courbet's "The Studio") or asserting her individuality (as in Manet's "Olympia"). Borzello reads this as an attack on another oppressive male fantasy, "the angel in the house" who would not have the confidence to return the (male) spectator's stare; in the twentieth century the model has achieved some status as a subject in her own right.

Although Borzello alludes to feminist painters who "have examined models too", she gives no account of their conclusions or examples of their work. This is unfortunate, for they might supply the imaginative analysis which *The Artist's Model* so conspicuously lacks. The book stops short at precisely the point where the question of the creative relationship between artist and model becomes

interesting. While it is true that in general models have earned less than the artists who painted them, it is difficult to see how things could be otherwise. Borzello may protest at the "patronizing" stories of artists who complain that models turn up late, fidget or fall asleep, but surely models (of either sex) are hired not to do these things. As to the charge of sexual exploitation, either actual or in terms of the economic power of male over female, her complaint is against the culture, and not its artefacts. It is true that some cultural products tend to reinforce a culture's economic practice, but others subvert it. Her own account shows that male paintings of female nudes have done both, but to treat them purely as sociological evidence is to look at the picture with one eye closed. To attempt to redress a non-existent balance by implicitly asserting a kind of "model's liberation" is absurd.

For a discussion of the mysteries of what is in fact a triangular relationship - artist-model-spectator - we must turn to Liam Hudson's *Bodies of Knowledge*. Not only is Hudson male, he himself takes photographs of naked females, as illustrations in his book testify. He is Professor of Psychology at Brunel University, and psychology forms the framework for a thoroughly art-historical discussion of Frances Borzello's stereotype, male images of female nudes. Hudson is aware of the ideological significance of the fact that most artists are male and most nudes female, and he acknowledges the feminist case, but that his text contains more female than male bodies "results not from leering chauvinism, but from a historical fact". His study is offered as "a conjecture about the way in which the imagination works". Images of the human form are "containers of reference" through which we are able to explore our ambiguous identity. As a psychologist, he argues that our identity is not based on a simple binary opposition of male and female, and that the various combinations of sexual function, dominant or submissive role

and object-choice are capable of sixteen-fold variations which almost inevitably lead to contradictions and ambiguities in our make-up.

These contradictions are often the subject-matter of art, and Hudson offers an ingenious explanation of why John Ruskin should have chosen to champion Turner. Crudely summarized, Turner, painter "of the sublime and of the disastrous", was a means by which Ruskin tested "the boundary that we all draw around ourselves in order to stay sane". In particular Turner's "Slavers throwing overboard the Dead and Dying - Typhoon coming on", which Ruskin first owned, and then sold as "too painful to live with", was a means by which he was able to explore his own psychological state.

Hudson's discussion of Ruskin's psychological needs as a spectator leads into the question of the function of image-making, as it affects both artist and spectator. There follows a fascinating discussion of the mutual influence of painting and photography. Photography freed painting from dependence on literal truth, and made it more aware of its formal properties, while the interest of painters in the figure as a subject declined. More recently, through Pop Art, the body has been reclaimed by painting but "in quotation marks", while photography has won the right to the formal conventions that were once given only to painting.

Like Borzello, Hudson sees Manet's "Olympia" as a turning point in the history of the nude. Though constantly complaining of the anonymity and lack of information about artists' models, Borzello thinks the fact that we know that the model is Victorine Meunier "has little effect on the viewer's understanding", even though she later remarks on the power of the nude's individuality. It is as if the naming of the model is one more male act of possession. Hudson makes the same points about the challenge of the model's stare, but goes much more deeply into its meaning: the invitation

to the connoisseur to see himself as voyeur. The pose, he suggests, echoes contemporary pornographic stereoscopic photographs.

With the discussion of the relationship between artist, model and spectator, Hudson moves back into the field of psychology. He admits that the artist-model relation is often "predatory" but offers other examples where the interaction is more subtle: Degas, who painted in brothels but had few contacts with women, who sympathized with them, and yet feared them; Bonnard and his wife, and the relations between the photographer Edward Weston and his models.

Hudson argues that there is a dynamic relationship between painter and painted, and in doing so reclaims the model's place far more effectively than Borzello. The flaw in the underlying argument of *The Artist's Model* is revealed when he writes:

among the politically radical, it is sometimes assumed that this collusion of artist and model is inherently discreditable... This prejudice, detectable, for example, in John Berger's writing, rests on an assumption that is almost certainly false, namely that relationships must be symmetrical (rather than reciprocal) before pleasure can properly be gained from them.

In the imaginative relationship the artist will always remain more or less in charge (this is the essential difference between a nude and a portrait, where by tradition the sitter is also the patron), but artist, model and spectator interrelate separately and collectively, and are joined by a fourth element, the image that all three enjoy.

In psychological terms, a artist, spectator and model explore their ambiguous fantasies. Free of the linear distortions of narrative, the still images of the artist or the photographer offer the psychologist, or for that matter the art historian, far more fruitful frames of reference than we have yet come to recognize.

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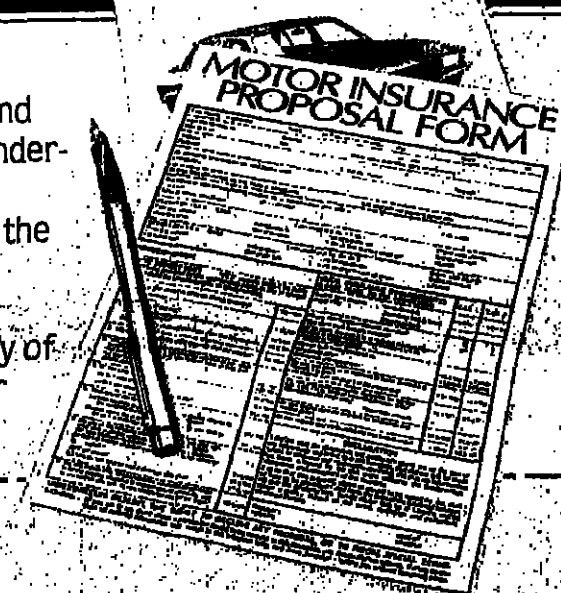
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Dreaming and desiring

Alex de Jonge

F. W. J. HEMMINGS

Baudelaire the Damned: A biography
251pp. Hamish Hamilton. £15.
0 241 10779 2

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

Les Fleurs du Mal: The complete text of 'The Flowers of Evil' in a new translation by Richard Howard
365pp. Brighton: Harvester. £18.95.
0 7108 0459 8

There are various ways of tackling a life of Baudelaire. Enid Starkie's way is *partiale politique* and *passionnée*, sympathizing with the personality and its attitudes with a degree of complicity that allows one to have a go at Anceile, the appalling Alphonse Baudelaire, and above all the supreme stinker Sainte-Buve. It is an approach that can bring great pleasure to author and reader alike, and which can also serve as an excellent way into the writing. Alternatively, one might consider Baudelaire with more detachment, as a fascinating example of arrested development, a personality frozen in mid-adolescence, the *degenerate* of dirty talk; a personality that has desires but lacks the maturity to execute them and which remains that of an emotional adolescent, a sexual anorexic who dreams rich dreams of sensual experience but who finds the realization of such dreams repellent, as poor Mme Sabatier discovered to her cost. This is the Baudelaire who enjoys writing spiritual poems in the parlour of warehouses, but who never goes upstairs himself, remaining content to watch the punters come and go like so many death's heads.

It is precisely this arrested development that enabled Baudelaire to write with such authority about the modalities and limitations of desire; this also that denied him the supreme consolation of genius, the forgiving serenity of mature art. Arrested development, also informs... his self-destructive and the pleasantly childish. In an attempt to have his fine for publishing obscene poems quashed, he writes to the Empress Eugénie asking her to forgive the "prodigious presumption of a poet who dares to occupy your Majesty's attention with a case (cas) as small as my own". Baudelaire knew perfectly well that one of the meanings of *cas* was "penis". In somewhat similar vein he loves to toady to the great and the good, writing sycophantic letters to persons such as Hugo whom he avowedly despised. This kind of not very lovely sycophancy must have played its part in his attempt to be elected to the Academy.

Despite... Hemmings's book does not really do anything for its subject; rather, it opens up... *plus des horizons*. It is as if he shuts them down. Although the title promises an examination of self-destruction with a metaphysical twist, in the event Baudelaire's life is viewed from the standpoint of an Anglo-Saxon schoolmaster who feels that his subject could have tried harder. Damnation is reduced to the deliberate courting of failure. "Was it bad luck or folly that led him to contract syphilis at the age of eighteen?" Ask anyone who has ever contracted a social disease whether it was bad luck or folly and he or she will reply that the two are not mutually exclusive and that, moreover, you have just asked a particularly stupid question.

The narrative suggests that the young Baudelaire of the Pension Bailly and the Hôtel Pimodan devoted most of his leisure hours to rake-hell womanizing. There is no direct evidence of this, and from what we know of him it seems unlikely. Professor Hemmings uses the poems as direct evidence of the kind of thing young Baudelaire got up to, thus suggesting that he spent the occasional night in bed with *affreuxes jolives*, failing to remind his readers that poets have been known to exaggerate in the interests of their art.

The analysis of Baudelaire's exquisitely ambiguous attitude towards socialism and revolution lacks subtlety. It has been suggested very

convincingly that his socialist sympathies were of a utopian, Fourierist colour, and that the sonnet "Correspondances" itself was derived from Fourierism. It was the materialist turn that socialism subsequently took which alienated Baudelaire's sympathies and helped bring about the breach with Courbet. It is simply not good enough when dealing with this aspect of Baudelaire to refer to T. J. Clark's preposterous thesis as if it were the last word on the subject or to ignore the view Baudelaire expressed, in 1849, of peasant socialism, "socialisme de peasant, féroce, stupide, bestial comme un socialisme de la torche ou de la faux" - any more than one should ignore the sycophantic letter he had earlier written Proudhon warning him of an alleged plot against him.

To be fair to Hemmings I have to assume that he was asked to write to a prescribed length. It is otherwise impossible to justify the summary way with which he treats his subject after 1850. We are taken through the prosecution of *Les Fleurs du Mal* at a breakneck speed; more summary still is the account of his attempt to join the academy, and on neither occasion is the role of Sainte-Buve given its due. Although we have earlier been given a page or more on the development of the *roman feuilleton* and Emile de Girardin, on the strength of the possibility that this is the kind of thing that Baudelaire might have written, *Le peintre de la vie moderne* is dismissed in a paragraph or so. There is no discussion of the transition from romanticism to modernism, verse to prose, Delacroix to Guys, and that whole process of gaining understanding of the new, secularized world, a spiritual Belgium; an understanding which, as Walter Benjamin put it, Baudelaire paid for with his halo.

The book is clearly not intended for the specialist, and yet the general reader could have taken great delight in the detailed texture of Baudelaire's life, the despairing and explosive letters to his mother and Anceile in the 1840s, the poignant and farcical details of his suicide bid, the precarious financial balancing act, the *navette* of the 50s, but there is no detail here. Although it must be said that the book is usually accurate on points of fact a kind of house loyalty requires me to remind its author that *Opium* and the *Romanic Imagination* was written by Althea and not Anthea Hayter. The one way in which the book develops our view of Baudelaire is the very proper emphasis it places upon the unusual and intense relationship he had with his mother; this accords nicely with the suggestion of arrested emotional development. Hemmings is also scathing of attempts to find a "secret architecture" in *Les Fleurs du Mal*. He concedes that it has an *aménagement* at *une fin*, but denies it a middle, suggesting that the order of the rest of the work is unimportant. He gives as his reason the fact that Poulet-Malassis "was also called on to decide the sequence of poems in the volume". If by this he means Baudelaire's letter of December 9, 1856, I think he is being a trifle disingenuous, for in it Baudelaire writes: "en même temps, nous pourrions disposer ensemble l'ordre des matières des *Fleurs du Mal*, ensemble, j'entendez-vous, car la question est importante".

Another indication of the intended readership of *Baudelaire the Damned* is the large number of translations it contains of both verse and prose. The latter are sometimes inaccurate, e.g. "diners longs et silencieux" become "frugal meals". They can also be infelicitous: "aussi bas que l'on peut être" becomes "lower than a snake's belly". We also find unlovely expressions such as "weirdo" and "life style", while the complete absence of telephones in the Paris of the Second Empire makes "calls girls" (*coup de fil*) a plain anachronism. The verse translations are so profoundly unsatisfactory because the author has opted for rhyme as his priority. Not only do his renderings read like something out of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, they distort the sense sufficiently in the interest of *les torts de la rime* to make

them unreliable witnesses on the semantic plane and hopeless renderings of the tonality of the originals.

Of course it is a truism to point out that poetry can never be translated. However, Baudelaire poses the translator a very special problem that takes us to the heart of his poetic practice. His verse aspires to the creation of synthesis, the "ténébreuse et profonde unité" which is the poem. At the same time the poet's love of obstacles makes him delight in setting himself challenges; he enjoys taking shocking subject matter - a rotting corpse or a young lady who has just enjoyed the enforced hussars - in a remarkable number of hussars - in order to dissipate his readers' initial disgust by means of rhetoric, more particularly by the extraordinary rocking and hypnotic power of his rhythms. For it is through the soothing quality of rhythm and texture that he creates that harmony and symmetry in his work which, he recognizes, answers some of our primordial needs. Rhythm and texture soothe and overpower our

distaste when we read poems such as "Une Charogne". Time and again we find his rocking, undulating line set against the jagged violence of his subject-matter which, in due course, it subjugates to create a "sorcellerie évocatoire". It is through texture that the poet effects his alchemical transmutations. This requires him to make demands of his medium which the conventional resources of syllabic verse are unable to meet. The French language, that "plano sans pédales" as Cocteau so brilliantly described it, lacks the auditory resources that might create the density of texture that he requires.

Baudelaire is obliged therefore to look elsewhere; to the articulatory aspects of language. Careful reading of his work will reveal that his principle textual resource is the steady alternation between open and closed lip positions, creating a muscular texture that imparts a steady pulsing quality to his verse, a quality which changed French versification overnight, opening up a whole range of new resources.

Tragedians at work

John Hope Mason

H. T. BARNWELL

The Tragic Drama of Corneille and Racine: An Old Parallel Revisited
275pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
£17.50.
0 19 815779 7

Some remarkable plays were written in Athens in the fifth century BC. The following century an Athenian philosopher wrote a brief work about them which was a curious mixture of taxonomy and practical advice. In the sixteenth-century Italy this work - Aristotle's *Poetics* - came to occupy a central place in the critical writings which flourished in the late Renaissance. In the process it became fused with ideas of literary value derived from Horace and the rhetorical tradition. In the following century terms derived from these Italian writings were adopted by French critics in their defence of the theatre; serious playwrights were expected to conform to them and were criticized for not doing so. This in turn led writers like Corneille and Racine to produce the *Discours*, *Examen* and prefaces which they published after the plays had been performed.

A knowledge of these terms has always been necessary for modern audiences to appreciate the plays but the interest of the plays themselves clearly transcends the terms. If that were not the case they would not

occupy the place they still have in literary studies and theatre repertoires. *The Tragic Drama of Corneille and Racine*, however, sets itself firmly against any other interest. The introduction dismisses all discussion of the play which uses "anachronistic criteria" (literary, psychological, or political), which takes the plays as expressions of their age, or which concentrates on a particular theme that may have been of particular concern to the playwright. According to H. T. Barnwell, not only do we know nothing of Corneille's or Racine's political, social and moral opinions, but such opinions are unlikely to "be of much interest to the present-day audience or reader". Instead we should concentrate on their art "as they understood it, that is, as Aristotle also would have understood it." This is "the only sure guide to an authentic, live, present-day reading or performance".

The naivety and inadequacy of this approach are obvious. It is as hard for us to know how the writers understood their art as to know how they understood the times in which they lived. We have some knowledge but it is very limited. Professor Barnwell himself admits that we have no full account of their working methods and that their critical writings must be used with care. When he ventures into conjecture, suggesting for example that Racine developed the simplicity of his dramatic style as a result of d'Aubignac's criticisms of Corneille, he is unconvincing. The fact that Corneille and Racine were, as he says, "very conscious artists", does not mean

that we can know what their intentions were, or exactly how they reacted to the pressures they worked under. It is even less to do with those impulses which led them to write their plays in the first place and which, we might suppose, also go some way to make those plays compelling.

To suggest that their understanding of their plays would have been synonymous with Aristotle's is manifestly false, and to wonder what Aristotle himself would have thought of them is merely one more "anachronistic criterion". Of course Corneille and Racine both read Aristotle. But their relation to his *Poetics* was an equivocal and uneasy one. Corneille explicitly distinguished his own work from Aristotle's precepts and claimed the right to live in his own century, not in fourth-century Athens. Barnwell agrees that Corneille did not understand Aristotle's ideas of *hamartia* and *catharsis* because he was

"like all his contemporaries, hopelessly tangled up with moral and psychological concepts quite foreign to Greek drama". In other words, we need a knowledge of Corneille's contemporaries to help us understand Corneille. But though some use is made of Descartes in one chapter - there was, we are told, a "perhaps inevitable affinity" between him and the writers in question - the book is opposed to almost all kinds of historical evidence that we learn little about those moral and psychological concepts.

The fact that Corneille and Racine were skilled technicians in their stagecraft is worth emphasizing, and Barnwell's attention to this aspect of their work is detailed and careful. His analysis of their use of suspense is good. But too much of the discussion tends to come down, in the end, to the "old parallel" of the public's "resemblances and differences between the two writers. Previous commentators are shown to be over-simple; for generalizations stand up to close scrutiny. But then we are given a new one to take their place: "linear" Corneille is opposed to "circular" Racine. Quite how this illuminates their work is unclear.

The final chapter, on tragic quality, reveals most plainly the unsatisfactory nature of this book. The term *tragedy* is altogether inappropriate to describe the behaviour or plight of Racine's central characters. To fit into this scheme Bérénice has to be seen as "over-confident and imprudent" and *Phèdre* becomes the tragedy of *Phèdre*. The closing remarks, about tragedy not only disturbing the moral universe but also restoring it, show a naive indifference to the awesome experience which some of Racine's and most of Corneille's plays provide. That experience is the principal reason for our interest in these plays. As far as this book is concerned it scarcely seems to exist.

Nicholas Murray

FICTION

Planet-play

Colin Greenland

ARTHUR C. CLARKE

2010: Odyssey Two
216pp. Granada. £7.95.
0 246 11912 8

Arthur C. Clarke's *2001: A Space Odyssey* was an extraordinary development in fiction, a novel written in collaboration with the director who was simultaneously filming it. Stanley Kubrick's film advanced science-fiction cinema in ways that the current boom has still not picked up, which is perhaps why Kubrick and Clarke are making their respective sequels, separately this time, it seems. Where there is any difference between the two versions of *2001* Clarke follows the film rather than the book, showing he knows which is the major medium these days, and which version most of his audience will know best.

Sequels to successes are almost inevitable now, even if Clarke himself thought that *2001* was not a story that could be continued. It certainly ended, visually and verbally, with a splendidly daunting image. David Bowman, only survivor of the team sent to investigate the black monolith inscrutably orbiting Jupiter, was seized by the alien artefact and sent whirling through his own life, forward to its end and then back to its beginning, being scanned like a tape recording from which the monolith's makers could learn the melody of humanity.

He emerged metamorphosed into the Star Child, a gleaming embryo adrift in space, which symbolized (since *2001* was a romance of evolution) impending promotion for the human race: a transcendence you can signal but not really narrate. For *2010* Clarke sensibly steps back down to our level to tell the story of a combined Russian and American expedition to salvage Bowman's deserted ship, the *Discovery*, and find out what happened. Bowman, the Star Child, has a fairly minor role, sent back to Earth as a ghost in order to continue transmitting information to the invisible masters on the other end of his kiosk. He revisits the pond where he

saw his brother drown, greets an old girlfriend on her television set, and attends his dying mother. He still has human responses, but they are muted by his superhuman state; or perhaps by his author, who is best at minor emotions, safely recollected in cosmic tranquility, all regret fading to nostalgia. Poignancy, he can do; pain, no.

In fact he can't handle any of the real turbulence of human intercourse. Aboard the search ship Alexei Leonov he adds it dutifully in regular doses, as required: a spoonful of sex, one of conflict, one of hate, no, too strong, one of resentment, then - nothing that can't be absorbed in a couple of pages. These are all jolly good chaps (of both sexes), burying their differences and settling on "with the job together." Towards the end of the book, having just that minute witnessed (and barely escaped) the unannounced explosion of Jupiter, the crew's response is to stage an informal seminar. "If you were given the contract, Vasili, how would you ignite Jupiter?"

The scope of *2010* is ostensibly huge, its landscape the whole solar system, yet it feels no bigger than the expansive airspace after dinner at a good conference, with the delegates rearranging the salt and pepper pots. Look, this is Io, all right, and here's Callisto. . . . Presiding over the conversation is the serene, avuncular voice of Arthur C. Clarke, his intellectual excitement conveyed only by a chuckle here and there as he elaborates a pun or contrives a facetious allusion. Our prospects for the twenty-first century look good by the light of the stars in the crystal sky of Sri Lanka. He can't help being optimistic about evolution and space flight and our eligibility for the galactic brotherhood, any more than he could avoid submitting the manuscript for *2010* on a microcomputer diskette and correcting it via satellite. He *invented* the satellite, for goodness sake. In *2010* Clarke is in his element, playing out there among the planets, igniting, if he wants to, another sun: he is as happy as a Star Child. The shadows of mortality and need that still occlude the horizons of other, earthbound authors are far, far behind him.

Paperback fiction in brief

OLIVIA MANNING

The Levant Trilogy
589pp. Penguin. £3.95.
0 140 5962 8

Olivia Manning's admirable *Levant Trilogy - The Danger Tree* (1977), *The Salt Lost and Won* (1978), and *The Sun of Things* (1980) - has now been issued in a single volume. Guy Fringlé, a lecturer initially attached to the University of Bucharest, and his wife Hattie, after having been evacuated to Athens, wind up among a conglomeration of British refugees in Cairo. Subtly, aptly, vividness and ease of manner are among the qualities that make these novels outstanding.

IAN MCEWAN

The Comfort of Strangers
125pp. Picador. £1.95.
0 300 26829 5

In Ian McEwan's second novel an unmarried English couple, on holiday in an unnamed city which is clearly Venice, falls in with an older couple whose designs turn out to be perverse and obsessive. The author's manner, careful, deft and impassive, enables him to transcribe effectively the moment of horror at the centre of the book, as well as the more mundane incidents that precede it.

MURIEL SPARK

Bang-Bang You're Dead and Other Stories
170pp. Granada. £1.25.
0 246 05578 9

These early stories by Muriel Spark are all curiously symmetrical in structure as well as being full of gravity and humour. They deal with crimes of passion in Central Africa, crankiness in the English provinces and the notion of sudden annihilation in wartime London. The playfulness common to all of them is most agreeable when it's least outrageous - in "The First Year of

My Life", for example. This is an entertaining selection; the author's usual jokiness and aplomb are much in evidence.

ANGELA CARTER

The Passion of New Eve
190pp. Virago. £2.95.
0 86068 341 9

You might call this novel an apocalyptic deviation; Angela Carter's baroque manner, which found a perfect outlet in the rich and lucid stories of *The Bloody Chamber*, is taken almost to the point of self-parody here. An *Orlando* of a book, it deals with the adventures of a man/woman in search of synthesis, and includes many mythic elements, ancient and modern. Angela Carter cannot write badly - you have only to turn to her selected essays, also published by Virago (180pp. £3.50. 0 86068 269 2) to realize how persuasive and vigorous her prose style usually is - but she sometimes writes over-or-nately; and there is something paradoxically arid in the luxuriant quality of this particular undertaking.

D. M. THOMAS

Birthstone

157pp. Penguin. £1.95.

D. M. Thomas's narrator Jo, on a coach tour in Cornwall, takes up with an odd American couple (mother and son) and joins them in crawling through a prehistoric birthstone, reputed to cure all ills. One of the Americans is subsequently overtaken by rapid rejuvenation, while the other succumbs to premature senility. Jo, mad and middle-aged (with more faces than Eve, and enough libido to go round the lot of them), undergoes a series of striking experiences, erotic and narcotic, in the shadow of a certain toughness and plainness of tone, and from schizoid vagueness by a high degree of narrative control.

Patricia Craig

Enemies of grace

T. A. Shippey

HUMPHREY R. MORRISON

The Masque of St. Edmundsburg
227pp. Blond and Briggs. £7.95.
0 85634 127 4

"Of all institutions the university is closest to a perfect model of a society which is not blindly drawn behind the inconsistent and peculiar talents of individuals." This is the motto which opens Humphrey Morrison's first novel, *The Masque of St. Edmundsburg*; and it creates immediately that sense of not having been at fault, jumping quite likely from one "people" in the typescript to another (though even if that is the case, and whatever the context, the last half of the sentence still remains baffling). The point is that no one can really blame them. Like the notorious misplaced chapter in James's *Ambassadors*, the error merely shows that this novel makes everyone - reader, printers, and author too - operate very close to their intellectual "ceiling"; and in that circumstance full comprehension must often be lost.

Memories of Henry James are indeed repeatedly stirred. The names of the characters - Feucht, Aicha, von Fluorn - sound odd. Artefacts take on a prominent role as expressions of their creators' personalities. There is great stress on angles of light, effects of space. Features are dwell on, and we are invited repeatedly to note their "delicate balance" (or "disconcerting air"), to enter into a conspiracy of insight. When plain words are used they are, like James's studied vulgarisms, put in inverted commas to show they must be glossed: "there was no doubt in Feucht's mind even about the university's character; the university was somehow inherently 'good'."

But what is it all about? The preceding paragraphs may be seen as

the reviewer's self-justification for not being able to answer, but the question has to be faced in the end. If one considers the unities of Time, Space and Action, it is clear only that this novel is set somewhere in Germany - though there seems to be no special reason why - and at some post-medieval but pre-modern date, like 1620, though there is absolutely no literary or political reference to base that on either. As for Action, the novel is about the attempts of a worthy second-rater, Doctor Dolke, to create a masque in honour of the University of St Edmundsburg, in overt or covert conflict with his more intelligent pupil Professor Kuitten, and his flighty present pupil Friedrich von Fluorn. The latter attempts to put on an anti-masque, eventually censored; clearly this would have been a satire on pomposity, though since we never see any of it (or of the masque either) it is hard to tell. The vision of the former is less sure, but it seems to involve rejection of the half-tones, the harmonies, the joy in shared ephemeral ritual which Dolke senses and tries to celebrate in his production.

Social grace threatened on the one hand by imprecision and on the other by a demand for boundaries, facts and precision? If so, one can see behind the microcosm of St Edmundsburg a certain force, a certain appeal to the present day reaching through the many layers of deliberate distancing. There must, though, be many Kuittenes now and even more von Fluorns for every Dolke. It is strange to find, in a first novel, such an air of valediction.

Irish refusals

M. G. McCulloch

MARGARET BARRINGTON

David's Daughter Tamar
174pp. Wolfhound Press. £7.50
(pocket, £3).
0 905473 74 4

"There's some", the little man in "It was to be" observes, catching himself in the middle of a tale too tall to command the slightest credence on the part of the listener, "as wud wear their teeth down talkin'." Margaret Barrington is in this slim volume, the fruit of four decades' work, at all brief.

Although some stories are slight and their subject matter is insubstantial, the author has, on the whole, appreciated the fact that the form lends itself too easily to romantic melancholia, sketches of missed opportunities, narrowed visions and reminders of life's brevity, for a reader to be satisfied with these alone. She is not afraid of mighty themes - ruin and damnation, bitterness and gall. The title story is that of a young girl condemned to regret youthful folly through many lonely years because her rigorous Ulster Protestant father would rather see her beauty withered than allow her to marry the Catholic father of the child she is carrying. By his refusal to countenance the union, David cuts himself off from the only creature he loves, and denies himself a legitimate heir to his precious land; that he does so through love, of his daughter as much as of his maker, renders the story tragic.

Many of the stories concern family relationships, particularly those between father and daughter; the same domineering, indifferent father appears in several. Barrington handles this man's relations with his children skilfully. In a variety of ways; she presents the object of her attention not only in different lights but from different aspects, so that, for example, the self-absorption which destroys the family in "Homecoming" can be seen as the source of comical obsessions in "Lives of Great Men."

Margaret Barrington's voice is sharp, but its tone is light. The world she depicts is harsh, cruel, unjust - and amusing. It contains tragedies such as *Tamar* and that of the woman living in the shadow of Cair Roe in "Village Without Men" (reminiscent in some ways of "The Landing" by Liam O'Flaherty, to whom Barrington was married for six years); but it also contains Mr Colbert. Undaunted by

the lack of a Protestant congregation he would minister regularly to a strange substitute:

The two dogs an' the atter 'ud sit there in the pews, quiet as Christians, while Mr Colbert wud read the service and play a hymn and preach a sermon. A great preacher seemingly. He'd jump on the pulpit, an' shout at the two dogs and the atter to give up their sinful ways. Then they'd go home and he'd cook the dinner.

The author's own accent is definitely Irish. Although Mrs Brownrigg, in *The Voice that Breathed over Eden*, exercises her evangelical fervour in Dorsetshire, and the excellent women Janie and Bits, in "Greater Love", could be found as easily in Bishop's Stortford as in Belfast, Ireland or well.

Margaret Barrington died in March of last year. Connoisseurs of the short story are fortunate that she did not remain silent after the publication, in 1939, of *My Cousin, Judith*, since, unlike some told by her, her characters, the tales she tells are worth hearing, and she tells them extremely well.

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Nesting in Northamptonshire

Redmond O'Hanlon

ERIC ROBINSON and RICHARD FITTER (Editors)

John Clare's Birds
105pp, with illustrations by Robert Gifford. Oxford University Press. £6.95.
0 19 212977 5

John Clare (1793-1864) is "the finest poet of Britain's minor naturalists and the finest naturalist of all Britain's major poets", as James Fisher remarked in his classic essay, "The Birds of John Clare" (tucked away in *The First Fifty Years: A History of the Kettering and District Naturalists' Society and Field Club*, 1956). Clare describes 145 British birds from his own observations - sixty-five of them the first county records for the species. He takes imaginative possession of three times more birds than any other poet except Tennyson, whose total he merely doubles. And he is an impressive botanist, too: forty of his 135 species of plants are also first county records.

His knowledge of nature was won at first hand - David Powell's *Catalogue of the John Clare Collection in the Northampton Public Library* (1964) tells us that he owned only a *Natural History of Birds* (Bury, 1815), an antiquated volume which included a checklist, John Macdonald's *Sketches from Nature* (1830), Robert Mudie's *The Natural History of Birds* (1834) and an 1825 edition of Gilbert White's *Natural History of Selborne*. And only the Gilbert White could have helped him to increase the accuracy of his observations, because Robert Mudie's book was published after Clare's great creative period, when all of his best bird poems had been written.

This gathering of John Clare's notes, poems and "natural history letters" about birds follows Eric Robinson's previous editorial work, with Geoffrey Summerfield, which produced *John Clare: The Shepherd's Calendar* (1964) and *Selected Poems and Prose of John Clare* (1967). But there is little overlap of material: the collected edition of Clare's poems for the Oxford English Dictionary will not be published for a year or two, and in any case some of the chief fascinations of this volume are to be found in his prose.

Robinson has completed his task with his customary care. He provides a reasonable index, a good glossary ("felled, v., thrown underhand with a sudden movement; poety, n., snail shell, particularly *Capaea memorialis*"), and a helpful introduction. Still, it was not a good idea to scold Fisher for failing to "underline [Clare's] interest in bird song", particularly "more exact representations such as his lines on the woodpecker". And sits for hours at "coo coo coo" / Still ending stultily with

a "huff". If Robinson opens his study window he will hear not three but eight coos before the huff.

Richard Fitter, on the other hand, might well have tried harder. The co-author (with Hermann Heinzel and John Parslow) of the Standard Collins Guide, *The Birds of Britain and Europe with North Africa and the Middle East*, could surely have stayed long enough, for instance, to comment on Clare's assertion that herons "lay from 3 to 5 eggs not as large as a hen's of a slender shape and a dirty yellowish ash color spotted and scrawled with brown and reddish lines and spots". Fitter's eggs are not at all slender, but rounded, blunt at the ends, of a uniform greenish-blue, with no markings whatever. Clare's description is odd - as odd as the eggs of his barn owl, in fact, which Fitter likewise declines to notice, eggs whose plain smooth ceramic white Clare has "patched with spots of a dark red or blood color".

If Fitter passes over Clare's mistakes in silence, he also tacitly adds to their number. Under Fitter's own heading of *Kingfisher*, for example, Clare is clearly discussing two different birds: our own familiar kingfisher and then county records.

a larger bird of a pied color much like the former in shape and habits very common about the fen dykes which the inhabitants call a kingfisher it flies on the top of the water down rivers and dykes and often seizes its prey on the wing - it makes its nest on the ground in the reed beds and lays 5 large eggs of a dirty brown colour the young take the water as soon as hatched.

Fitter allows us to assume that Clare has mistily invented a species all of his own. But from a distance the back of the dipper does look black; its throat and upper breast are white; it flies fast and straight like a kingfisher, its short wings whirring rapidly with a pause or a glide, and, as it darts past a few feet above the surface of the water, it looks pied. It feeds mainly on aquatic insects but not exclusively so; it likes to build its domed nest a little higher than Clare places it - on a stone or a tree stump by the river, or under a bridge, but in the fens would have little choice of raised sites; it does lay five surprisingly large eggs (further they are white); its young do develop remarkably fast and they not only take the water but walk on the river bed beneath it.

Earlier ornithologists, with every material advantage over him, conflated the kingfisher and the dipper, but Clare, I think (just as he knew the greater and the lesser spotted woodpeckers apart long before the Victorians debated the matter) was not confused.

Likewise, under Fitter's heading of *Nightjar* Clare well describes the hypocritically odd "Fem Owl or Goat sucker or Night jar or night hawk," which makes "an odd noise in the evening beginning at dewfall and continuing it at intervals at night." But Clare then also tells us that:

I met with another nocturnal bird called a 'night hawk' I say another because I am certain it was not the Fern Owl it was larger I have started it in the night from among the short stumpy bushes on the low pasture often but could not distinguish the colour or make of the bird all I could tell of it was that it seemed very swift on the wing and from that I imagined it of the hawk kind.

It made an "odd noise which was a dead thin whistling sort of sound which I fancied was the whistle call of robbers" and the locals "knew no other name" for this bird "than that of the Night hawk and they supposed it preyed on the young rabbits by night and made their burrows its hiding place by day."

Surely this is the stone curlew, or night hawk (which is the country name for the stone curlew or thick-knee or Norfolk plover, as much as it is for the nightjar)? Silent and still as a stone by day (the young birds flatten themselves along the ground as one approaches and will let themselves be touched rather than move), the stone curlew feeds on insects that come out at night. Under a good moon, it will fly fast and low, as Clare says. It likes to nest on the rubble round rabbit warrens - and as for eating young rabbits, its wide open, yellow-ringed, psychopathic eye would entitle it to prey on the Hound of the Baskervilles, if it chose.

Lastly, Fitter imputes to Clare three *Mystery birds*; and one of these is a bird shot by a labourer which was

about the size of a large goose but more slender in the body it flew low and heavy like the Puddock its wings were very long and its neck about the length of a goose its eye was large and black and its bill black and hooked exactly like an Hawk the upper mandible hooked over the other as if for tearing its food its legs were red striped with black and its feet webbed with odd large claws its general color was white with light washings of brown all over like the breast of the Heron.

Despite its discoloured legs and its webbed feet (which, all the same, are huge and fleshy and rough and nobbled for carrying slippery fish headfirst through the air) - this is, surely, not a mystery, but an osprey.

Two recent additions to the Small Oxford Books series of pocket anthologies are *The Country House*, compiled by James Lees-Milne (110pp, 0 19 214139 2), and *Fox-Hunting*, compiled by Sara and Raymond Carr (120pp, 0 19 214140 6), both published by Oxford University Press at £4.50 each. The drawbacks, as well as the pleasures, of both institutions are recorded: at Hopetoun House in the eighteenth century the 1st Duke-ess of Northumberland was "seated... into the Closet to look for a Chamber pot but it being in a Box I could not find it" while Leon Trotsky noted that "the attraction of hunting is that it acts on the mind like a poultice on a sore".

Recording Radnorshire

A. L. Le Quesne

KATHY BEN HUGHES and DAFYDD IFANS (Editors)

The Diary of Francis Kilvert, April - June 1876
121pp. Aberystwyth: The National Library of Wales. £9.75.
0 907158 02 1

Almost the entire manuscript of Kilvert's diary was destroyed in the 1930s - for reasons which have never been clearly elucidated - by his niece, into whose possession it had passed. Only two of the twenty-two notebook volumes are known to have survived; these now belong to the National Library of Wales and the University of Durham, one each. The National Library have just published their volume, in an edition pleasantly illustrated by photographs of the area around Clyro, in Radnorshire, in which Kilvert spent most of the months it records; it is very much to be hoped that the University of Durham will soon follow suit.

Does Kilvert's diary deserve publication in full, with the sort of meticulous editing that this volume has obtained? The diary was well received on the first publication of William Plomer's selections from it in 1938-40; but it was not until the 1960s that the blaze of public recognition burst full upon it. Since then its success has been one of the literary phenomena of the age.

At length on BBC television, in the form of a dramatic monologue it has been heard at the National Theatre; it has been republished in paperback by Penguin and in an abridged version by the Folio Society. Its appeal may have been mostly to the middlebrow. Some literary mandarins have not known quite what to make of this obscure country curate of third-class intellect whose attempts to find a publisher for his inispid and mawkish verse (the two samples that appear in this volume are much above the average) mercifully met with no success and whose diary is replete with priggishness, snobbery, sentimentality and overloaded verbal ornament. It is easy to argue that the success relies on its capacity to evoke the nostalgia of today's middle classes for an age when the rural landscape had been groomed to the peak of its visual perfection and when their own forebears ruled the social roost with lordly ease.

It is easy, but those who have lingered long enough over Kilvert to allow their eyes to become used to the light, have acknowledged that it will not do. There is some truth in that explanation, but not the most important part of the truth. In his renderings of landscape, and sometimes also in his social set-pieces, Kilvert is an observer of splendid minuteness and objectivity - an

observer of acute visual, and also to the editors of this volume interesting point out) aural, sensibility. When it for this particular social era has passed away, he will remain a writer of minor, but exquisite, talent. It is a stroke of good fortune that the period covered by this surviving MS volume, the months of April to June, 1876, in Kilvert appears to have begun keeping a diary with the new year of 1876, and in this volume he is in the full flush of exuberance of a man, who has discovered the true nature of his life. He never painted any later scene so lovingly as he did these long hot early summer months of 1870, spent partly at Clyro, partly at his parents' home at Langley Burrell in Wiltshire. Many of the best passages, of course, were included in William Plomer's selection; but it is remarkable how much was excluded from that selection which is good as anything that Plomer included. There is, for instance, a description of the dawn chorus that is a masterpiece of delighted and exact observation. Nor is precise observation the whole; what this part of the diary has to offer now and then there comes a subtle vision to remind us that there was a visionary in Kilvert too:

The sunlight struck the white wall of Wernwy standing lone upon its bare bleak hill and the Old Barn opposite, and they shone out bright slaps and clear. The silvery trunks of the oak of *fedves* (birches) along the Cefn gleamed and glinted with a polished lustre in the strong western sunlight. I heard the great sudden flap of an unseen wing. Angels were going about the hill in the evening light.

With those last two sentences, we are in Samuel Palmer's country; alas Blake's country.

We are reminded by the *fedves* that Kilvert, though an Englishman, had a strong feeling for Wales and the Welsh and enjoyed trying out in his diary the smattering of the language, though I had long been obsolete in eastern Radnorshire. The strongly Welsh flavour of this volume, though unfamiliar, is not therefore inappropriate. The editors, Kathryn Hughes and Dafydd Ifans, have done an excellent scholarly job. They have supplied a good introduction, a welcome equipment of slightly pedantic notes (something that Plomer's edition badly needed), an index as good as his (which is saying a lot), a list of place-names together with their correct Welsh forms, and a list of errors found in Plomer's reading of the MS (almost all of them trivial). It is pity that they have allowed one or two bad typesetter's errors to divide their proof-reading; but it is the only criticism that their work invites. So to return to the question that I raised, yes, the surviving volumes of the diary certainly do deserve publication in full; they also deserve first-rate editing, and it is good to see that this volume has received it.

BIOGRAPHY AND MEMOIRS

Smiling through

Garry O'Connor

JAMES HARDING

Maurice Chevalier: His Life 1888 - 1972
280pp. Secker and Warburg. £8.95.
0 436 19107 5

Born in 1888 in the vile Parisian slum of Ménilmontant, the son of a debauched and violent father who soon deserted his mother, Maurice Chevalier had to learn in early life with unpropitious circumstances which tested his character and which may well explain the extraordinary magnetism he was to develop later as a music-hall artist. James Harding tells us that aged only twelve Chevalier was propelled by his gay aunt mother, nicknamed "La Louque", in the ragged-trousered costume she had made for him, on to a sedgy off-concert stage. "At least you didn't forget to smile," she told him as he returned burning with humiliation.

Soon "le petit Chevalier", bantering with obscenities and croaking out daily ballads (he hardly understood the words), was performing in the lowest kind of establishments frequented by pimps and whores as well as cooks and housemaids. He smoked heavily, fought off homosexual advances, was loved by the noted pederast Félix Mayol, he told him, according to Harding, "You're barking up the wrong tree, Monsieur" - drank and smoked it all up. "Send him back to school. It's shameful," they shouted when he tried out his foulmouthed jokes in smarter places: "Is that your grandfather's suit?" Later he became known as "Le Petit Jésus". Yet at the age of eighteen he escaped from the slum-mire into the Folies Bergère, guided over by L. L. Fiers, described by Harding as "Tall, lean, monocled, a double-looking author who was director of revues".

The Folies taught him polish and understatement. Here the much older and very famous Mistinguett, who with

her exquisite bare legs was the leading *neuseuse de revue*, swallowed him up both onstage and off, and insisted on orchestrating their tempestuous love affair by trailing crowds of press men everywhere. They were never to marry, for to do so would have been to destroy that sense of unique possession which each offered everyone in the audience.

Mistinguett gave Chevalier good advice: "All performers who get through to the audience show their teeth. That's my secret!" Service in the First World War saw him wounded in Melun, then carried off in convalescent captivity to Alten-Grabow near Berlin. He was well treated there and afterwards returned to Mistinguett, though now, bawling at her larger billing and wanting more time on his own. So at this point the shadowy Yvonne entered the picture. Younger than Mistinguett, Simone was "uncomplicated" and "directly sensual". (In these early years he had also known Colette, who appeared in a dance and mime number called "Flesh", in which her "male partner" ripped her costume to reveal her naked breasts.) She put Chevalier, re-baptized Chevalillon, in her novel *La Vagabonde*; for him, though, she dazzled slight outshone her literary reputation.

Ageing, he belonged more and more to his public. A nervous breakdown and attempted suicide temporarily halted his sensational success at the Casino de Paris, but even in these circumstances marriage to the tranquil Yvonne Vallée, a musical-comedy actress, seemed only an accident. He never became a father (Yvonne's only pregnancy ended in a miscarriage), and Irving Thalberg of MGM anyway provided a more than adequate alternative to parenthood in the form of Hollywood stardom: Chevalier's smile became more toothy, more fixed. On the day of his divorce, in one of the many excellent illustrations in this book, he is seen flashing it benignly as he helps Yvonne into a taxi.

In Hollywood he and Dietrich

Lootenist

Colin Cooper

TONY PALMER

Julian Bream: A Life on the Road
210pp. Macdonald. £8.95.
0 356 07880 9

Tony Palmer's book, consisting for the most part of recorded conversations, shows that the master guitarist has lost none of his engaging informality. Indeed, one suspects that he sometimes encourages the image of the breezy busker from Battersea, so many are the references to "the old box" (his *apeto* Romanillos guitar), "tubes of py" (cigarettes), "a spot of linctus" (an alcoholic drink) and "the kick-off" (the beginning of a concert). But almost in the same breath he is talking about a work by Bach: "The piece is brimming with inspiration, melodically and rhythmically, and the first and third movements have a passion and yet paradoxically a dramatic stiffness of such intensity that I could play it every night of the year."

Both modes of utterance are unmistakably Bream. They are not incompatible. On one page he says "I'm only in it for the loot", on another he makes it clear that what keeps him on the road and his fingers on the strings is the ability to find something new in familiar music, a true sensation. The dichotomy is an illusion: both statements are accurate.

Bream has a love-hate relationship, not with the guitar but with the demanding life of travel he leads. A where he starts at Ostend, proceeds to Munich (taking in many other towns on the way) and returns via Strasbourg, calling at Paris for "a few extra bob and a first class blow-out". The casual tone disguises the distaste he feels for the physical details: the seedy hotels, the extremes of temperature which play havoc with his guitar, the fighting, the yowls of a particular nuisance and risk of being robbed of his well-earned "loot".

There is a standing joke in Tin-Pan Alley that an interviewer stuck for a question can always ask a musician what he had for breakfast. Tony Palmer unashamedly tells us what Bream had for breakfast, and much more. Musicians are particularly likely to appreciate Bream's invariably sensitive and well-phrased comments about music. He speaks good sense about wood, especially about the "focus" (a favourite word) that a good guitar can produce as distinct from volume of sound.

Bream's feeling that the guitar is an instrument of the senses rather than the intellect is well expressed, though not unique. The argument that composers find it only too easy to make their effects in terms of sound rather than musical structure - that the guitar's ravishing tone is its own worst enemy - surely holds more than a grain of truth. But Bream himself has stimulated much worthwhile composition, from Britten, Walton and many others scarcely less eminent.

The guitar's new-found respectability was not achieved without a struggle. Segovia met hostility, and overcame it. Nearly fifty years after that battle was fought, Julian Bream was warned not to bring "that thing" into the hallowed halls of the Royal College of Music. The attitude persists, though fortunately it is no longer so widespread.

The author gets many names wrong - Macabe for McCabe, for instance. An index would have been helpful. The photographs are abundant and interesting. Perhaps above all else the book will stand as a record of one man's career; how he studied piano, cello and composition (and so became a better guitarist), how he became a world-famous performer, how he persuaded distinguished composers to write for him, how he copes with the difficulties of living, of marriage, of divorce and of performing; of having to give something of himself every time he plays, yet leave enough recreational energy for the next time, which could be the following night.

became lovers and appeared in public in identical white scarfs and black suits. Soon his image was as distinctive as Chaplin's: the straw hat, bow tie and pouting lower lip of the man now universally known as "Momo". Harding suggests that he only really loved his mother and after her death in 1931 didn't become seriously involved with any other woman, though he had a Jewish mistress less than half his age.

Chevalier sang on till the age of eighty: a few years before he died in 1972 from a kidney complaint, he swallowed a mouthful of sleeping pills and slashed his wrists with a razor. Next morning he was found alive in sheets slopping with blood. Harding's judgments on him are banal: "Behind the international star, behind the most expensive artist in the world, there crouched a fearful little boy."

This biography eschews description of him singing "Louise", "Valentine", or "Thank Heaven for Little Girls", but I would have liked more of the domestic privacies. If these were hard to come by, Harding might have explored Chevalier's own dozen popular memoirs, published from 1946 on and owing a great deal, Harding claims, to a ghost-writer. Harding draws on them in the early part of his book but they receive hardly more than a mention. Their condensed, sometimes almost Célinesque, style creates a sense of immediacy often lacking in Harding's portrait, while Charles Aznavour's comment, quoted by Harding, that "Chevalier was a secretive man... (he) didn't care for people walking into his life. He was... in every sense the contrary of Piaf who lived for mankind", could have tempted Harding more into exploring that secrecy in terms of the character the memoirs project. Behind the fixed grin, wasn't there a suggestion of ferocity?

During and after the Second World War, Chevalier was widely accused of collaboration (though he was also shielding his Jewish steward on the Côte d'Azur). In response to a German invitation, he sang at Alten-Grabow. The evidence Harding assembles both for and against these charges is thin, and suggests no more than that Chevalier was muddled.

Chevalier's presence or tone of voice doesn't come to dominate this book as it does his memoirs. But he never quite dominated Mistinguett either, if we can believe what she said of him: "He lives the way he dances. He doesn't dance, he hops." Somewhere he still lies buried, trapped beneath his ghost-writer, or in Harding's book, with his features blurred in a swift-moving montage of café-concert and casino, and of attractive oddities such as Harry Fragson, the Soho-born singer who ate cleansing cream with a soup spoon.

Hippest of the hip

W. J. Weatherby

JEAN STEIN, co-edited with GEORGE PLIMPTON

Edie: An American Biography
455pp. Cape. £9.95.
0 224 02068 4

To understand what happened to Edie Sedgwick, the wealthy young American woman who became an Andy Warhol superstar and died of an overdose of drugs at twenty-eight, a course in Scott Fitzgerald and John O'Hara is a good start, topped off with a study in the final years of movie actresses Marilyn Monroe and Dorothy Dandridge, who died much as Edie Sedgwick did but for different reasons.

The doomed Edie came from a top-drawer New England clan, but she seemed to be less their offspring than the product of a mounting hysteria in American life. It was her misfortune to come of age at the climax in the 1960s when the hysteria found its natural ending in the Vietnam war, just as the war was fought on drugs, so the Pop Art circle in New York where Edie

A bid for independence

Nesta Roberts

PRISCILLA NORMAN

... In the Way of Understanding: Part of a Life
336pp. Foxbury Press, Foxbury Meadow, Godalming, Surrey. £10.
0 946053 00 6

It is forty years, more or less, since Sir Richard Livingstone, in *The Future in Education*, promulgated his exhilarating heresy about "uneducated clever women who have seen much of the world". In middle life, he said, they were "so much the most cultured part of the community" because they had been saved from "the horrible burden of inert ideas" that had infected education.

Had Sir Richard recently met Priscilla Norman, one wonders? - for here is the very exemplar of such women. Her use of that quotation as one of her chapter headings is evidence that she has met him, if only through his writings, and that modesty has not prevented her recognizing a cap that fits.

For readers who have known the author in only one of her personae the surprise of the life chronicled here is likely to be its protean quality. Priscilla Norman was born Priscilla Reyntiens, daughter of a Belgian officer who was ADC to Leopold II, and of a mother, Lady Alice Josephine Bertie, whose uncle, Sir Francis Bertie, later Lord Bertie of Thame, was possibly the most outrageous of our ambassadors in Paris. Her father died in 1913, after years of illness, and for her first eighteen years the family "flitted from house to house", in Belgium, France and England, and the child from governess to governess, with a brief interlude as a boarder at the Cavendish Square Convent in London.

If her formal education was esoteric and disjointed, the experience of the world that ran parallel with it was richly various, gained in the houses of relatives who were involved in both Conservative and Liberal politics (an uncle was a Conservative Chief Whip, a step-aunt was a Churchill); in the fashionable bohemia of Catherine d'Erlanger, to which she was introduced by her mother's cousin, Cosmo Gordon Lennox; as a VAD at the Winchester Hospital, which took the worst of the wounded from the First World War hospital ships that docked at Southampton.

Small wonder that, the war over, Priscilla Norman found "coming out" and the social routine that followed it tedious in the extreme. It was purely as a bid for independence that she entered into matrimony with a young

man who, while socially "suitable", proved totally incompatible. She herself calls the marriage "a disastrous experiment", though there were two sons who remained with their mother after she and her husband decided on separation and finally divorce.

Her own life, or lives, of public service began then. First the LCC, where, as a member of the Education, Public Health and Maternity and Child Welfare Committees, she did much to promote nursery schools and got the introduction to the child guidance service which was to develop into a lifelong interest in mental health. In 1930 she was a member of the Feversham Committee whose work finally brought about the amalgamation of four voluntary organizations concerned with mental health into the National Association of Mental Health (now renamed MIND).

Her second marriage, slightly improbable and clearly extremely happy, to Montagu Norman, Governor of the Bank of England (can this be the only recorded courtship in English social history that began at the breakfast table?) brought no check to her outside activities. With the war impending she became one of the founder members of the WVS (now the WRVS), though, from the first, Priscilla Norman was sensitive enough to foresee the hostility which the new organization was likely to arouse in established voluntary bodies, and, as Vice-Chairman of the Women's Groups on Public Welfare, she helped to produce the remarkable wartime report, *Our Town*, which gave a salutary shock to the more fortunate of our two nations.

Peace enabled her to concentrate on mental health. As a magistrate she was concerned with the treatment of young offenders and the training, or lack of it, given to prison officers. As Chairman of the Executive Committee of the NAMH she was closely involved in its pioneering and educational work in this country and travelled widely during her work with the World Federation of Mental Health, Unesco and the World Health Authority. As a member of the Board of Governors of the Bethlem Royal and Maudsley Hospitals for twenty-four years she looked upon the experts who surrounded her as tutors and came to have a grasp of the work in which they were engaged that was remarkable in a lay person.

In his perceptive preface to her book, one of those experts, Dr Denis Leigh, suggests that Priscilla Norman, whom he calls, deservedly, "a modern pioneer in the field of mental health," is herself a doctor *manqués*. In fact she is something rarer and more valuable. She is a true amateur, committed, knowledgeable, independent, a species that is threatened with extinction in contemporary society.

The Naturalist

And he knows of the waving riverweed, the deflection of currents and waterborne willow-fluff, where it comes from - if not where it's going - and the stylish scudding sticklebacks, red-bellied helicopters hovering and fighting for grass-stands to build chaotic nests among green fronds. He saw the dingy drowned rabbit wreathed in weed, trapped under a low, useless arch where small flies buzzed their obsequies. And he can name each species of these riverweeds, seen as if from aircraft over rain-forests - the water-crowfoot, its white flowers the size of buttercups extending in the sun above the stream like amateur seashells, and the starwort and milfoil, Canadian pondweed grown European... and loves their mesmerizing water-rhythm that guards its secrets well. Certain wisdoms are given him, he knows, but is more sure that the most important ones elude him still.

James Malpas

Falmouth at its Best

The crew of a submarine
Buying jewellery in the town.

The dusk shepherd

Leading his herd to water just outside it.
A man with a liver-coloured face
Flopped in the sawdust of a butcher's shop.

Under the corrugated iron roof,

The cinema's elastic shadows lean forward and snap back.

The pyramid with the strongroom door

Is a memorial to the squirrels, it peaks.

Flush and taut, as the horizon-line

Sleeks, the taut horizon-line.

There's always a small piece of shit lying outside the magistrate's entrance.

The trigger of the sun

Shoots my shadow out in front.

The sea's on edge.

It is full of submarines, transporting jewellery.

Keep the line sleek to catch the fish.

A banquet on a flower-boat

Out on the Roads; the good companions

Taut, angular and sleek as insects in their silks.

Peter Redgrove